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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
MODE AND SUBJECTS
OF
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM,

BY
JOHN STOCK,
MINISTER OF ZION CHAPEL, CHATHAM.

“Buried with him,” alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.—John Wesley. [Note on Rom. vi. c. 4, v.]

“The manner of baptizing was by immersion, which is what our church allows.”—George Whitefield. [Eighteen Sermons, page 297.]

“Ego neminem damno in quo aliquid Christi reperio.”—Jo. Sturmins.

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CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED.

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PREFACE.

It is justly said, that, “a humble tenement should never have an imposing entrance;”—and it is equally true that an unpretending volume should never be introduced by a lengthy or elaborate preface. It will, however, be proper to state here, the circumstances which first brought the author before the public as a writer upon the subject discussed in the following pages. In the year 1839, he was called upon to assist at the first administration of believer’s baptism, within the memory of man, in the Town of Windsor. He prepared with some care, two lectures, which he read on the occasion; and which seemed to produce a deep impression at the time of delivery. At the request of many christian friends, a large edition of these lectures, was published for circulation in the Town and Neighbourhood of Windsor. This edition has been long since exhausted, and the author has had repeated applications for copies, which he has been unable to supply.

Several aged and experienced friends have frequently urged him to re-publish the work ; but he has always until now shrunk from the task.

The present production can scarcely be called a second edition of the former one. It is in fact a new book. All that was considered valuable in the former work is retained here ; but the author has preferred adopting in the present volume the more popular style of the Essay, and has introduced topics which were not even alluded to in the lectures. The present production is more than twice the size of the previous one, and gives a bird's eye view of the whole baptismal controversy. The writer has gone into the entire question, and is not aware that he has omitted referring to any of its material points.

He had some hesitation as to the propriety of publishing his book after the appearance of Dr. Carson's learned and unanswerable work on the same subject. But on reflection he was induced to believe, that, many persons will read a small two and sixpenny volume like the present, who will not wade through a bulky tome like Dr. Carson's. Many people desirous of light upon the subject have but little time for reading. This volume is intended especially for them. It gives them a manual of the entire question in a small compass. Such as it is the author commends it to the Spirit's blessing. He has earnestly sought divine guidance

while writing it. He has endeavoured to avoid every thing approaching to asperity, though he has always spoken unreservedly and boldly. God forbid, that, he should on the one hand unnecessarily wound a brother's feelings; or that he should on the other hand, flinch in the advocacy of truth, or in the exposure of error. He desires both to preach and to write with the day of retribution in full prospect.

The preparation of the following pages for the press was nearly completed before Dr. Carson's last work on the same subject appeared. His first production the writer never had the happiness of seeing.

May the Spirit of grace and truth bless this effort to uphold and defend one of the Redeemer's ordinances, and may the glorious day soon come when christians "shall see eye to eye" upon this now much controverted subject.

THE AUTHOR.

Chatham, April 1, 1844.

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PART I.

BAPTISM PROVED TO BE IMMERSION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

EVERY thing relating to the kingdom of the Redeemer, is unquestionably worthy of the serious attention of the true believer. Nothing, with which the glory of Christ and the purity of the Church are connected, should be viewed as unimportant, by the man who calls himself a Christian. Every revealed truth, and every ordinance of the everlasting gospel, should be more "precious to him than gold, yea, than much fine gold." The ordinance of Christian Baptism, whatever may be our views of its subjects and mode, cannot therefore with propriety be regarded as a light and trivial affair; it must not be dismissed from our attention after a slight and prejudiced examination: still less may it be treated with

ribaldry and contempt : it is a subject of grave importance, and demands of us a candid, unprejudiced, and prayerful scrutiny. When we consider the glory of its institutor ;—the important place which it occupies in the church of God ;—the honour which was put upon it by the Mediator's example ;—the frequency with which the seal of the divine blessing has been affixed to its administration ;—the fatal and wide spread mischiefs which have ensued from its abuse and corruption ;—and the conflicting views of its nature and intent, which at the present day abound ;—we cannot but feel that it becomes us to give the subject a full and searching investigation. The man who can treat a matter of such moment with levity, is surely deserving of the severest reproof. It would be far more in accordance with his profession as a christian, if he would imitate the candour of the noble Bereans, and “ search the scriptures,” not hurriedly, but patiently, and “ daily,” to see “ whether these things be so.”

My dear reader, are you an earnest and sincere enquirer after truth ? do you desire, in your examination of the sacred page, not so much to be convinced that your views are right, as to ascertain what is the will of Christ ? are you prepared to give the subject discussed in the following pages an unprejudiced investigation ? If you are, then before you proceed any further, lay down this volume, and look upward for the teachings of the divine spirit, that you may be rightly guided in your decision. But are you prejudiced, bitterly and violently prejudiced, against the sentiments to be advocated in the following pages ? Does your conscience tell you that you pant not for truth, but for triumph ? Then go and confess your sin before God : pray for a better spirit than you now possess : overcome your bigotry by supplication and grace ; and then, and

not till then, would I have you peruse this book. You will never read it to profit, if you are determined not to be convinced. Prejudice, like stained glass, tinges every ray, even of the pure light of heaven which falls upon it, with its own peculiar hue! And Oh! thou Holy and Eternal Spirit, thou glorious fountain of all wisdom and grace, cause thy teachings to illumine the mind of him whose eye is now scanning these pages! Bow his every faculty in mute and reverential attention to the dictates of the scriptures, thine own infallible oracles! Teach him thy will, and lead him into all the truth!

CHAPTER II.

MEANING OF THE TERM.

The first point which it is our intention to discuss, is the mode of Baptism. We shall endeavour to establish the following proposition:—

I. THAT THE ONLY SCRIPTURAL MODE OF BAPTISM IS IMMERSION. The proof in support of this sentiment is various and multiform; order, however, seems to require that we should consider,

1. *The meaning of the word Baptize.* It is much to be regretted, that the translators of our authorized version of the Bible, allowed themselves, in deference to the pleasure of James I., to Anglicize instead of translating, this perfectly unambiguous term. Had they acted in this matter, faithfully to their God, instead of obsequiously obeying the dictum of their earthly king, many of the disputes about the mode of Baptism which have convulsed the Church of Christ in England for so many ~~years~~ might have been prevented. *year* Baptism is a term which was transplanted from the Greek into the English Language, in order to render the mode of initiation into the visible church, ambiguous to uneducated people: it had no being in English parlance until it was invented to suit the convenience of ~~some~~

Pædobaptist

translators. *Its import is Immersion.* This is admitted by the most learned, even of the Pædo-baptists themselves. The Lexicons of Dr. John Jones, of Schrevelius, of Scapula, of Stephens, of Schleusner, and Parkhurst, all of whom were Pædo-baptists give immersion as the radical and primary meaning of Baptism. This is in fact true of every Lexicon of any authority in the literary world. There is not one which does not give the same verdict. Until of late years, that Baptism is immersion, was considered an indisputable matter of fact. The most learned of the ancient Pædo-baptists unhesitatingly confessed its truth. Luther says, "I would have those that are to be baptized, to be entirely immersed, as the word imparts, and the mystery signifies." (a) Calvin observes, that "the word baptize signifies immersion, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church." (b) Zanchius asserts, that "the proper signification of baptize, is to immerse, plunge under, or overwhelm in water." Tindal remarks, that "Tribulation is our right baptism, and is signified by plunging into the water." (c) The learned Grotius has the following, "That baptism used to be performed by immersion, and not by pouring, appears both from the proper signification of the word, and the places chosen for the administration of the rite." (d) Acknowledgments equally explicit, are to be met with in the works of Vossius, Witsius, Limborch, Vitringa, Venema, Claude, Saurin, Baxter, Dan. Rogers, Burkitt, Poole, Bingham, Picart, and Bower:—of Archbishop Secker, Archbishop Tillotson, Archbishop Leighton, Bishop Stillingfleet, Bishop Taylor, Bishop Nicholson, Bishop

(a) Luth. Cat. minor. (b) Christ. Insti. L. 4. c. 15. (c) Pref. to Obed. Christ. Man. 1528. (d) Apud. Polum. Synop. ad Matt. iii. c. 6v.

Pearce, Bishop Prettyman, Bishop Hoadley, Bishop Burnett, Bishop Hall, Bishop Davenant, Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, Dr. Samuel Clarke, Dr. Wall, Dr. Bloomfield, Dr. Wells, Dr. Manton, Dr. Scott, Dr. Whitby, Dr. Barrow, Dr. R. Wetham, Dr. Robert Newton, Dr. John Edwards, Dr. Towerson, and Dr. Macknight, all of whom were Pædo-baptists, and men of sound and extensive erudition.

That most eminent of Scottish preachers, Dr. Chalmers, of Edinburgh, candidly confesses, that "the original meaning of the word Baptism, is immersion." (a) Dr. Adam Clarke says, "that the Baptism of John was by plunging the body, (after the same manner as the washing of unclean persons was,) seems to appear from those things which are said of him," &c., (b) and in his comment on vi. Romans, 4 v., he observes, "that it is probable the Apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion, the whole body being put under the water." John Wesley, in his note on the same place makes a similar admission, "Buried with him, alluding to the ancient custom of baptizing by *immersion*." We meet with the following passage in his journal; Mary Welsh, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the church of England, by immersion." (c) Dr. Neander, one of the most illustrious scholars which modern Germany has produced, says, that "the usual form of submersion at Baptism, practiced by the Jewish Christians, was transferred to the Gentile Christians. Indeed, this form was the most suitable to signify that which Christ intended to render an object of contempla-

(a) Lectures on Epistle to Romans, vol. 2, chap. vi. (b) End of Mark. (c) Extract from Journal from his embarking for Georgia, page 11, edition 2.

tion by such a symbol—the immersion of the whole man, in the spirit of a new life.” (a) We leave the reader to conjecture how these holy and learned men could reconcile their practice of sprinkling with these candid admissions; our business is with the simple fact, that they grant us all we wish to prove in this chapter;—*that baptism is immersion.*

BAPTO, the root from which *baptizo* is formed, has but two meanings; to immerse, and to dye. The former is the primary, the latter the derived signification. Dyeing was usually performed by the Greeks as it is among us, by dipping. Hence the word came to signify “to dye, by dipping,” and in process of time, “to dye generally, and by any mode.” But when the word is used in its primary sense, it uniformly means to immerse. It should however be remembered, that *bapto* is never applied to the ordinance of christian baptism.

BAPTIZO, the derivative of *bapto*, has but one meaning; to immerse. It never received the secondary sense to dye. In its literal use, it is a word descriptive of *mode*, and nothing else. It is frequently employed figuratively, as is our word immerse; but its meaning is in every case the same. We are accustomed to use such expressions, as “immersed in wine,”—“in care,”—“in affliction,”—“in debt,”—“in vice,”—“in pleasure;”—but such metaphorical uses of the word immerse, change not its signification; it still means to immerse and nothing else. The Greek word *baptizo* is sometimes used in a similar way: thus we meet with such phrases, as “baptized in wine,”—“in affliction,”—“in vice,”—“in debt,”—“in pleasure,”—“in the spirit;”—but in such phrases the word

(a) History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church by the Apostles, vol. 1, page 187.

does not depart from its original signification any more than does our word immerse, when similarly applied. It still signifies immersion, and immersion only.

Baptizo denotes "to immerse in any fluid or penetrable substance." The idea of water is not in the word at all. It is applied to immersion in oil, or blood, or fire, or filth, or earth. It as much refers to a baptism which defiles, as one which purifies. The following passage in the Septuagint proves this, "*kai e anomia me baptizei*;" "and iniquity overwhelms or baptizes me." When iniquity is the baptizer, it cannot be said that baptism is a purification.

The word does not in itself express any thing but MODE; it does not convey any information upon the manner of the immersion, whether it is performed by one's-self or another person; nor upon its length, whether it is permanent or transient; nor upon its intent, whether it is for purposes of purification or defilement; nor upon the substance or fluid, into which the immersion takes place; we must look to other and independent sources, for information upon these points. When however no part is particularly mentioned, the word implies the immersion of the whole body. Much has been said upon the peculiar force given to verbs by the termination in *zo*; Dr. Carson in his unequalled work on baptism learnedly observes, "that this termination when employed to form a derivative, appears to him to have served some such purpose as the Hebrew causal form, and to denote the making of the action of the verb to be performed." (a) The examples which he gives are the following; "*ploutco*, is to be rich, *ploutizo*, to make rich, *deipneo*, is to sup, *deipnizo*, is to cause to sup, or to give a supper." To these I would add the

(a) Page 20. .

following; *exastheneo*, is to grow weak, *exasthenizo*, is to make weak, *dokeo*, to be a person of consequence, *doxazo*, to render glorious, *aristao*, to dine, *aristizo*, to cause to dine, or to entertain with a dinner, *siteuo*, to feed, *sitizo*, to give food to, to make fat. Hence it would appear, that baptizo, in the first instance, meant to cause to dip, or to lay under the immersing substance. It is however applied to all kinds of immersion, whether voluntary, or involuntary, and however effected.

Now it is quite clear, that a word thus peculiarly expressive of mode, cannot designate three modal acts, so different from each other as immersion, pouring, and sprinkling. If the mode designated by baptizo, be immersion, it cannot be pouring, or sprinkling, as well; unless pouring, and sprinkling, are the same modes of action as immersion! It is impossible to speak in too strong terms of the absurdity involved in such a supposition! How can any one modal term describe three acts so essentially different from each other! If then baptizo means to immerse, it cannot mean to pour, or sprinkle; and that it does mean to immerse, may be speedily proved.

That the root *BAPTO*, has this signification, will surely not be disputed; it is used in this sense, in the following places:—(a)

By Euripides, in his *Hecuba*: “Take a vessel ancient servant, and having dipped it in the sea, bring it hither.”

By Aristophanes, in his *Eirene*: “Bring the torch, that I may take and dip it.”

(a) I cheerfully acknowledge that I am indebted for most of these examples, (especially those from the higher Greek classics,) to Dr. Carson's elaborate and unanswerable work on baptism; a production which has immortalised its author, and for which he deserves the hearty thanks of every sincere enquirer after truth.

By Aristotle, who speaking of a kind of fish, observes, "They cannot bear great changes, as the immersion of them into cold water, even in summer." Referring to the remedy for the bite of a certain kind of snake in Africa, he says, "Of which the remedy is said to be a certain stone, which they take from the sepulchre of a king of ancient times, and having immersed it in wine, drink." He applies the word to the immersion of animals in a pool of Sicily, which had the property of resuscitating them when put into it after suffocation.

Aratus terms the setting of a constellation, its "dipping into the sea." He uses the same figure in describing the setting of the sun, "If the sun dips himself without a cloud, in the western sea." Again he says, "If the crow dips his head into the river."

Homer applies the word to the dipping of red-hot iron in water, by a smith, to temper it.

Herodotus applies it to an immersion of the whole body in a river, for the purpose of purification. "The Egyptians consider the swine so polluted a beast, that if any one in passing touch a swine, he will go away and dip himself, with his very garments, going into the river."

Examples from the classics however need not be multiplied. It may be safely affirmed, that, when *bapto* is used in its primary sense, it invariably denotes dipping; and it is the primary sense alone, which its derivative receives from it.

BAPTIZO, the derivative of *bapto*, and the word which is invariably applied in holy writ to Christian baptism, is never used in the classics or in the scriptures, in more than the one sense of immersion.

It is applied by Polybius, vol. iii. p. 311, to soldiers passing through water, baptized, or immersed up to the breast. Strabo, also applies the word to Alexander's

soldiers "marching a whole day through the tide, between the mountain Climax, and the sea, baptized or immersed up to the middle." Lib. xiv. p. 982. Diodorus Siculus, describing an overflowing of water, says, "many of the land animals, baptized or immersed in the river, perish."

The sinner is represented by Porphyry, (p. 282.) as baptized or immersed up to his head in Styx, a celebrated river in hell.

Heraclides Ponticus, applies the word to the plunging of red hot iron in water, for the purpose of cooling it.

Plutarch uses it, to describe an immersion in the sea.

Josephus, a learned Jew, who wrote in the Greek language in the APOSTOLIC age, repeatedly uses the word, and invariably in the sense of immersion. He employs it several times to represent the immersion of a sinking ship; he uses it in describing the death of Simon by his own hand, in the following way, "he baptized or plunged his sword up to the hilt in his own bowels." In relating the murder of Aristobulus, by command of Herod, he says, the men "pressing him down always as he was swimming, and baptizing or immersing him as in sport, they did not give over until they entirely drowned him."

Hippocrates, the celebrated physician of antiquity, always uses it in the same sense. "Baptize or dip it (the blister) again in breast milk and Egyptian ointment." p. 254. "He breathed as persons breathe after being baptized or immersed." p. 340.

Let the reader cast his eye over these passages, and tell me whether they do not incontrovertibly prove that baptizo, signifies to immerse. Can he resist the conviction which they must force upon his mind? They are however, but a scantling of the proofs which may

be adduced. Dr. Carson has brought forward a host, which must, we think, put obstinacy itself to the blush, and silence the most violent of our opponents.

But it has been said, why might not baptizo have a secondary signification, as bapto, the root, unquestionably had? To this we answer; baptizo might have received a secondary meaning, in common with many other words; but, the simple fact is, that it did not receive any such addition to its signification. While there was nothing to hinder it from enlarging its meaning, the truth is, that it did not do so. It had but one signification when the scriptures were written, and that was to immerse. Dr. Carson has defied the whole literary world to prove the existence of a secondary meaning to baptizo, and bold must that man be who will venture to accept the challenge.

We would ask our Pædo-baptist brethren one question, suppose they were translating a passage out of the New Testament, the Septuagint, or any classical writer, in which the word baptizo occurs, would they render this disputed term, sprinkle; and would they stake their literary reputation, upon the propriety of such a rendering? Or if they were composing in Greek, and wished to express the act of sprinkling, would they select the term baptizo? We firmly believe that they would be more likely to use baptizo, to express the act of immersion! Of one thing, we are sure, that they could not find a word in the whole compass of Greek literature, that would more forcibly or elegantly convey the idea!

The Greek is not a meagre or ambiguous language; it is characteristic for its fulness and precision; it has distinct words which express most accurately the several acts of pouring, sprinkling, immersion, washing, and purification. The circumstances of the language in

which the New Testament was inspired, therefore afford no excuse for ambiguity. There was no necessity for the slightest obscurity. If the Holy Spirit had meant to convey the idea of pouring, why did he not employ the word *cheo*, or *leibo*? or if he had intended the ordinance to be by sprinkling, why did he not use the term *raino*, or *rantizo*? Why select a word, the meaning of which is immersion, if he had intended to convey the idea of sprinkling or pouring, when there were words in the language which would have most precisely and forcibly expressed either of those acts? Why, in short, say immerse, if he meant sprinkle or pour? If he desired to convey the idea of a purification, without respect to mode; and if he intended to leave us to our own fancy in the selection of the mode, why did he not use *katharizo*? Would the merest tyro in Greek literature select *baptizo* in preference to *katharizo*, to express a purification irrespectively of its mode? Would President Beecher himself do so? Would he have been understood in the Apostolic age, if he had done so? And will any sincere believer in the inspiration of the Bible, charge the blessed Spirit with being the wilful author of such unnecessary ambiguity, in making known to us the mind and will of God?—will any christian accuse the Spirit of darkening thus gratuitously those lively oracles which are intended to guide us in the most momentous affairs, and which should consequently be so clear and perspicuous, that he who runneth may read? can it be supposed, that the Spirit of love has purposely thrown a veil of obscurity over the light of his own revelation and employed terms to mislead us? These however, are the charges which are virtually brought against the blessed Spirit, by all who assert that he used the term *baptizo*, to convey the idea of pouring or sprinkling or purification!

The Greek, though it has undergone considerable alterations, is still a living language. The changes which it has passed through are much less in extent and importance than those to which the Latin has been subject. The feeble and effeminate Italian of the present day is but little like the nervous and emphatic Latin of ancient Rome ; but the living, in many respects closely resembles the ancient Greek. The term baptizo is still current among the inhabitants of Greece, and the meaning which they give to it is immersion.—They are amazed at our disputes about a point which is to them so clear. More than once have they been appealed to, and their unvarying and unhesitating testimony has been in our favour. And surely they are the best judges of their own native tongue !

Let me entreat the reader seriously to ponder the testimony of a Greek monk, in a curious work of his upon the subject of Baptism, some extracts from which appeared in the Baptist Magazine for September, 1842. This singular book is written in modern Greek, and shews no mercy to the poor Papists and others who practise pouring or sprinkling instead of immersion. The Greek in which it is written, is substantially the same as that of the New Testament. Whatever asperity there may be in the spirit of the writer ; and however erroneous may be his theology, he is clearly one of the best witnesses that can be called in to give evidence upon the meaning of a word in his native tongue.

The title of the book is as follows ;—“ A book called Light of those in Darkness ; in which are contained Testimonies and Proofs of the Divine Fathers’ that only the Baptism given from God to the Apostles cleanses sins ; but the filthy and salted sprinkling and pouring,

satanically devised by the Latins, (*a*) not only do not cleanse, but even defile the sprinkled, as foreign from the evangelical and apostolical tradition. Composed by a certain religious Monk, a genuine son of the Eastern Church, for the conversion of the heretical Latins, and the benefit of orthodox christians; and now first printed 1757." The following passages occur in this book:—"The Holy Gospel says BAPTIZING, these vile magicians (the Latins) must of necessity say RHANTIZING, sprinkling and pouring as they do. Besides, what agreement has baptizing with sprinkling and pouring? none at all surely." p. 12. "Sprinkling and pouring is not a divine fruit, but of Popish origin, and a novel practice, and contrary to the Gospel TERM, and to the declarations of Apostles and Councils." p. 12. "And again, the word baptism will not express any thing else but dipping." p. 49. "The Latin does not go down into the water, how indeed does he try to come up." p. 49. "And besides, as we have said, the word baptism means DIPPING, and its being performed according to the injunction of the church, signifieth the death of the Lord, according to Damascenus; "For Baptism manifests the death of the Lord." But what I pray, does sprinkling signify? ye yourselves do not know." Perhaps, as I suppose, it signifies that fire which consumed Sodom, because likewise will sprinkling consume both them that teach and defend it." p. 29. "I think that not one doubt any longer remains, that such things whether they be sprinklings, or pourings around, or pourings upon, are not called baptism, but impious and unlawful deeds." p. 35.—Such are the sentiments of the modern Greeks upon the subject! Of course we

(*a*) Alluding to the ceremonies which the Papists practise at Baptism.

do not defend the temper or the theology of the above extracts; we simply produce them, to prove that the Greeks themselves unhesitatingly affirm, that baptism is immersion, and immersion only; and to such testimony it will not do to turn a deaf ear. Who can be more competent than they to give an opinion in such a case?

CHAPTER III.

THE SCRIPTURAL USE OF THE TERM.

We have not assigned a distinct chapter to the consideration of the *scriptural* acceptation of the term Baptism, because there is really any necessity for so doing ; but solely with a view to meet the modern argument, that the term when applied to christian baptism, has a peculiar and sacramental meaning, which can be ascertained, not by the universal usage of the language, and the ordinary rules of philological criticism, but solely by a reference to the probabilities of the case ! The meaning ordinarily assigned to the term by the abettors of this fantastic theory, is “purification,” or “consecration.”

Such a mode as this of dealing with the word of God is fraught with imminent peril : it opens a door to the wildest fanaticism, and permits men to make the sacred text a nose of wax, which each critic according to his predilections, may twist and turn into any shape he pleases. The principle if carried out would envelope the whole revelation of God’s mercy, in a cloud of impenetrable obscurity : the gospel trumpet would give a fatally uncertain sound, and who then should prepare himself for the battle ? One cannot but shudder at the

consequences which would ensue if this mode of dealing with the sacred oracles were universally acted upon :—our joy and peace in believing would be destroyed ; we could never attain either the full assurance of understanding or faith ; uncertainty would characterize all our expectations ; and the calm settled confidence of the saint in the infallibility of the foundations of his hope would be destroyed ! “ If the foundations be destroyed,” or even moved, “ what shall the righteous do ? ” Then indeed, might the Romanist insultingly ask us, how can you explain so ambiguous a book as the bible, without the traditions of the church ?

Such a method of interpretation is palpably opposed to the simplicity of the scriptures. The Holy Spirit has given us no intimation that he uses words in any other than their ordinary sense ! he has furnished us with no glossary of theological terms ; on the contrary, he assures us that his revelation is so clear, that “ he who runneth may read,” and “ the way-faring man though a fool shall not err therein.” If the Spirit had not used words in their ordinary acceptation, how could he have been understood ? If he had employed words in a new and unknown sense ; and had not stated that fact, and given the new sense, we might as well have been without the bible ! This theory would match in extravagance any of the wildest fancies of the ancient mystics ! (a)

Unquestionably one of the designs of baptism is public consecration to the service of God. The immersion of the believer in water upon a profession of his faith, is the appointed mode of publicly dedicating him-

(a) This chapter was written BEFORE I was privileged to see Dr. Carson’s conclusive refutation of President Beecher’s theory. I have pursued my own line of thought upon the subject.

self to the adorable Trinity. In his immersion he is consecrated. But this fact is not to be gathered from the meaning of the term baptism; for that still retains its literal and ordinary acceptation, but from other passages of scripture in which the signification and intention of the act, when applied to believers upon a profession of their faith, are fully explained. The argument in favour of this theory founded upon the novel sense, in which it is asserted the scriptures use other terms, such as faith, and justification, deserves a moment's notice, as it wears some appearance of speciousness. But I assert, that the scriptures use both these words in their ordinary acceptation, and in no other. The term "*pistis*," signifies simply belief; and "*dikaïoma*," a pronouncing just; and are not these the meanings which they retain in the New Testament? The essence of the act of faith, is belief; and of justification, a pronouncing just. It is true that the faith of God's elect has some peculiar properties; and is attended with extraordinary concomitants and results; but these are not expressed by the term faith, but are described at length in other parts of scripture. Hence we read, that the faith of God's elect "is the gift of God;" and "a fruit of the Spirit; that it, "purifies the heart;" "overcomes the world;" and "works by love." But the meaning of the term "*pistis*" is not disturbed by these facts; its signification is still neither more or less than belief.

It is equally clear that the justification of the gospel has some peculiarities: which however do not at all affect the meaning of the original words *dikaïoma*, and *dikaïosis*. They still express the idea of pronouncing a man just. We gather the peculiarities of gospel justification from other and independent sources.

We are expressly informed that we are justified, or

pronounced just, “freely;” “by God’s grace;” “not through our own works;” but through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” But these peculiarities do not destroy the essential signification of justification, which is still a pronouncing just.

And if the act of immersion when applied to believers, on a profession of their faith, be peculiar in its attendant circumstances, and in its signification, this changes not the nature of the act itself. The word baptizo does not express these peculiarities; nor is its obvious meaning in the smallest degree changed. We have other sources from which to gather that immersion is the mode of consecrating believers publicly to Christ. The scriptures tell us, that this immersion is to be administered solely to believers; and in the name of the Trinity; that in it, the convert publicly “puts on Christ;” “is buried with Christ; and “rises to newness of life;” that it is emblematic of the Redeemer’s immersion in the waves and billows of affliction; and expressive of our own faith, in the certainty of the resurrection of the dead. But these facts are to be gleaned, not from any human notions of the probabilities of the case; but from the explicit testimony of revelation. The essence of christian baptism, so far as the physical act is concerned, is still immersion; and this is all that the word in itself conveys, or is intended to convey! For the intent and signification of the act, we must search the sacred oracles, which contain all the information upon those points that can be desired.

From the examination of this novel method of darkening the counsel of God, we turn to those passages of scripture in which the administration of the ordinance is described.

“Then went out to John all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized by him, in

the river Jordan, confessing their sins." (a) Here we may well enquire, how our Pædo-baptist brethren can explain the conduct of John, and the people of Judea, unless they admit that baptism is immersion. Why should a river be resorted to as a place for sprinkling a few drops of water on the face? and why did John lead the people into the river, if he only intended to sprinkle them? If he immersed them the whole scene is natural enough; but on the sprinkling theory, it was a mere farce. In this place the preposition "*en*," which is almost invariably used after the term baptizo, is employed and is very properly translated *in*. It would have been absurd to have said, "John baptized with the river Jordan," and therefore our translators have been obliged to render it "in the river Jordan." It cannot be supposed that John lifted up "the river Jordan," and applied it to the candidate; the baptized person was applied to the river, not the river to him. (b)

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John, *IN* (or into) Jordan. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." (c) In this passage the preposition *eis*, which literally signifies *INTO*, is used after baptizo. No language could more emphatically describe an immersion in or into water, than that here employed. In the work of the Greek Monk, from which I quoted in the 15th. page of this book; the preposition *eis* is used where he wishes most emphatically to express a descent, not *to*, but *into* the water. "The Latin does not go down *into* (*eis*) the water." p. 15. In fact no one who looks at

(a) i. Mark, 5. (b) Mr. Carson has demonstrated that the preposition *en*, never signifies *at*, and that when used with baptizo, it should always be rendered *in*. See his work pages 337, 338, 339. (c) i. Mark, 9, 10.

the original of i. Mark 9, 10, with an unprejudiced mind can deny that our Redeemer was immersed in or into Jordan.

Dr. Macknight, though a Pædo-baptist, well observes, upon this passage, that "Jesus submitted to be baptized, that is buried under the water by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection." (a) And Bishop Taylor candidly admits, that "The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion, in pursuance of the sense of the word in the commandment, and the example of our blessed Saviour!" (b)

"John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there." (c) If John sprinkled he only required a little water; why then did he select a place for baptizing, because there was much water there." Admit however that baptism is immersion, and we can readily account for his choice.

"As Philip and the Eunuch went on their way, they came to a certain water. And they went both down *into* the water, both Philip and the Eunuch and he baptized him; and they came up out of the water." (d) In this account there are several things deserving of our attention. Why did Philip and the Eunuch wait until they came to this pool of water, before the latter was baptized; if sprinkling or pouring was the mode of administration? They were travelling in a desert, and had abundance of water at hand in skin bags; and Philip could have as easily administered the ordinance in the chariot, as any where else. He could have taken one of the skins of water and emptied its contents on the

(a) Expos. Epist. note on Rom. vi. c. 4. v. (b) Pædo. Bap. Exam. Ducta Dubitant. vi. 3. ix. (c) iii. John, 23. (d) viii. Acts, 38.

head of the Eunuch, or sprinkled a little water in his face, without troubling him to move; much less was there any necessity for them both to go down into the water. Substitute the word sprinkle for baptize, and then see what sense can be made of the passage. "And they went both down into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he sprinkled him; and they came both up out of the water." But use the word immerse, and every thing becomes perfectly intelligible. "And they went both down into the water, and he immersed him; and they came up out of the water." The criticism upon this passage, which is intended to prove that they only went to the water, and came from the water, has been so often and so successfully refuted, that it scarcely deserves notice. We would simply ask our Pædo-baptist brethren; supposing they wished to describe a descent into water, for the purpose of immersion; and an ascent out of water after immersion; what more emphatic particles and general construction could they use, than those which are here employed? The original reads as follows;—*katebesan amphoteroi eis to hudor, kai ebaptisen auton; hote de anebesan ek, tou hudatos*. The preposition *eis* is used to express their going *into*, and *ek* to describe their coming *out* of the water; and two more emphatic and conclusive terms could not have been employed. The former corresponds as we have previously said, with our particle *into*; and the latter invariably signifies *out of*. (a) If a descent into water, immersion in water, and a subsequent ascent out of water, be not meant by these words, then there is no possibility of expressing them in the Greek language!

(a) D. Carson proves to a demonstration that *ek* never means *from*, though sometimes in a free translation it is so rendered. page 131—140.

There are many places in the New Testament where the term BAPTO is translated and not transferred, and in all such cases, it is rendered immerse or dip. Where a faithful translation of the term could be productive of no great inconvenience, we always have the word dip. Let the reader seriously consider the following cases:—

“He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.” (a)

“It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish.” (b)

“Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it: and when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot.” (c)

“Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.” (d)

“And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.” (e)

In all these instances the word in the original translated dip, is BAPTO.

There are several cases in the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament, in which bapto, and in some instances baptizo, are used to express the act of immersion. We specify the following instances.*

“And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin.” (f)

“And the Priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord.” (g)

(a) xxvi. Matt. 23 (b) xiv. Mark 20. (c) xiii. John 26. (d) xvi. Luke 24. (e) xix. Rev. 13. (f) xii. Exod. 22. (g) iv. Lev. 6.

* Of course we do not refer to the Septuagint version because we regard it as inspired, but simply because it is composed in Hebraistic Greek, and is a valuable help in determining the sense in which words are used in the New Testament.

The same repeated; "And the Priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and" &c. (*a*)

"And the Priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in the left hand." (*b*)

"He shall dip them, and the living bird, in the blood of the bird that was killed." (*c*)

"He shall dip them in the blood of the slain bird." (*d*)

"And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water." (*e*)

"Let him dip his foot in oil." (*f*)

"He dipped his finger in the blood." (*g*)

"The feet of the Priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water; for Jordan overfloweth his banks all the time of harvest." (*h*)

"Dip thy morsel in vinegar." (*i*)

"That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies." (*j*)

"Jonathan dipped the rod in an honey comb." (*k*)

"He took a thick cloth and dipped it in water." (*l*)

"Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." (*m*)

In each of these examples, the word in the Septuagint corresponding with dip, or plunge, is *BAPTO*.

There is another passage in the Septuagint which illustrates with peculiar clearness the meaning of the term *bapto*.

"And the Priest shall take some of the log of oil and pour it into the palm of his hand; and the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left

(*a*) iv. Lev. 17. (*b*) xiv. Lev. 16. (*c*) xiv. Lev. 6. (*d*) xiv. Lev. 51. (*e*) xix. Numb. 18. (*f*) xxxiii. Deut. 24. (*g*) ix. Lev. 9. (*h*) iii. Joshua 15. (*i*) ii. Ruth 14. (*j*) lxxviii. Psa. 23. (*k*) i. Sam. xiv. c. 27. v. (*l*) ii. Kings viii. c. 15. v. (*m*) ix. Job. 31.

hand ; and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the Lord." (a) The reader is requested to observe the great importance of this passage. * Here were the three distinct acts of *pouring*, *dipping*, and *sprinkling*, to be most accurately distinguished from each other. Of course the Seventy would select that word in each case, which would most emphatically express the act to be described, and most effectually distinguish it from the other two acts. And what word think you, dear reader, do they use to express the act of dipping, as distinguished from pouring, and sprinkling? No other than *bapto*! Who then will venture to assert, that *bapto* means either dipping, pouring, or sprinkling?

If *bapto* means either pouring, sprinkling, or dipping, indifferently, why is that term here selected, as of all others the most adapted to distinguish the act of dipping, from both pouring, and sprinkling?

In the following passages the word *BAPTIZO*, is used ;

"Then went he down, and dipped, or baptized himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God." (b)

In this passage the same word and construction are employed as are used to describe christian baptism.

(a) xiv. Lev. 15, 16. (b) ii. Kings v. c. 14. v.

* The author is bound to state in justice to himself that the examples given in this chapter from the New Testament and the Septuagint, are the results of his own reading. He finds they are all specified in Dr. Carson's comprehensive work, but he had collected them together by his own labour before the appearance of that masterly production. Dr. C's. first book on Baptism, he regrets to say, he never saw. This statement will he hopes shield him from the charge of borrowing without acknowledgment. He can honestly say these examples are his own.

The word expressing the act of dipping, is not bapto, but BAPTIZO; "*ebaptisato en to, Iordane.*" The corresponding word in the Hebrew is *Taval*, which has but one meaning, "to dip or immerse." (a) And in rendering this word into Greek, the Seventy could find no term that would more forcibly express its meaning, than baptizo! It can be but effrontery to deny, in the face of this fact, that baptism is immersion!

"Iniquity baptizes or overwhelms me." (b) I do not pretend that *anomia me baptizei*, is a correct translation of the Hebrew original. No one can be even slightly acquainted with the Septuagint, without being convinced that it gives in many cases, a mere paraphrase, and in some others, an incorrect translation of the original. I refer to it because it was written by Jews, and in Hebraistic Greek, and exactly corresponds in its style, &c., with the New Testament. The Septuagint is only an uninspired translation of the Old Testament; but it explains in many instances, the phrases and idioms of the New Testament. In the above passage it uses baptizo to express an overwhelming or immersion.

"Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not stay her (Judith); then she abode in the camp three days, and went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and baptized, or immersed herself, in a fountain of water by the camp." (c) This is a passage from the Apocrypha, but it affords us satisfactory evidence of the sense in which the Hebraistic Greek uses the term baptizo. In addition to the testimony of the word employed to denote the act of immersion, we are informed that after Judith had dipped, she ascended, or as our translation has it, came out. How she could have come out of the fountain, if she had not previously

(a) See the Lexicon of Gesenius. (b) xxi. Isai. 4. (c) xii. Judith 7.

been in it, I cannot understand. And why she should go into it, if she did not intend to immerse the whole person is equally inexplicable. She had every opportunity of doing so with perfect security from interruption. The guards were forbidden to follow or annoy her; she was screened from observation by the darkness of night; and was in the bottom of a secluded valley.

“He that washeth (baptizes, or immerses,) himself after touching a dead body; if he touch it again, what availeth his washing.” (a) The allusion in this passage is to the washing which completed the purification of the person who had rendered himself unclean by touching a dead body. At the close of his seven days of uncleanness he was “to purify himself, and wash his clothes, and *bathe himself in water*, and be clean at even.” (b) The writer in this passage enquires;—if after the completion of his purification, a man should again touch a dead body, would he not have the whole process to go over again? The final bathing of the person is mentioned, because it was the concluding ceremony of the whole ordeal, and baptizo is the word by which that act is here expressed.

We may sum up the whole of the argument of this chapter, in the following striking and incontestible facts. The word “dip,” as we have shewn, occurs six times in our translation of the New Testament, and in every case the original word is “bapto!” The words bapto, and baptizo, though they occur repeatedly in the Scriptures, are not in a solitary instance rendered pour, or sprinkle! The words pour, and sprinkle, are frequently met with in our translation, yet there is not a

(a) xxxi. Sirach 25. (b) xix. Numbers 19

case in which the original is either bapto, or baptizo. In every instance in which the term baptism occurs, it will make good sense if you translate it immersion; but the substitution of pouring, or sprinkling, will in most cases render the passage unintelligible.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICATION OF BAPTISM.

The preceding arguments will derive additional force from a consideration of the significancy of the act of baptism, when applied to believers upon a profession of their faith. We may fairly infer, that baptism is *immersion*, and not pouring, or sprinkling; if we find that the emblematic significancy of the rite absolutely requires the former mode of administration. When God condescends to illustrate important truths by means of external rites, he always wisely adapts the means to the end, and makes the type as strikingly illustrative as possible of the truth which it is intended to exhibit. How fully are these remarks illustrated, in the breaking and eating of bread, and the pouring out and drinking of wine at the Lord's Supper. The breaking of the bread beautifully sets forth the bruising and mangling of the Redeemer's body; the eating of the broken bread, illustrates our participation in, and spiritual nourishment by the death and sacrifice of Christ:—the pouring out of the wine represents the shedding of Immanuel's blood, and the drinking of the wine sets forth our reception of the atonement, and the exhilarating joy and

gladness with which faith in the blood of Jesus is accompanied.

The ordinance of Baptism is significant of things which require immersion, in order to their adumbration.

I. It is emblematic of *the believer's burial with Christ, and his resurrection to a newness of life*. "We are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (a) "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (b) Baptism sets forth the Redeemer's burial and resurrection; and the believer's burial and resurrection with him. The question with which we are concerned is this;—is not immersion the mode of baptism, with which alone these figures agree. We admit that the believer's burial and resurrection with Christ in baptism are only symbolical; but we have still a right to enquire which mode of baptism best agrees with the figure? There would be no agreement between the sign and the thing signified, if the mode of baptism were sprinkling or pouring; for how can either of these modes fitly represent a burial and resurrection? When however the believer is immersed under water, and raised up again; the Redeemer's burial and resurrection, and the spiritual burial and resurrection of every true believer, are beautifully typified. The literal burial of the convert in the liquid grave of baptism, and his subsequent resurrection therefrom, appropriately symbolize the spiritual burial and resurrection which the rite is intended to exhibit. Accordingly some of the most eminent of the Pædo-

(a) vi. Rom. 4. (b) ii. Colos. 12.

baptists have admitted that these passages clearly prove that baptism was anciently administered in nearly every case by immersion ;—and among these, we may mention the names of John Wesley, (*a*) George Whitefield, (*b*) Dr. Adam Clarke, (*c*) Archbishop Secker, (*d*) Archbishop Tillotson, (*e*) Bishop Hoadley, (*f*) Bishop Hall, (*g*) Bishop Davenant, (*h*) Dr. Scott, (*i*) Dr. Whitby, (*j*) Dr. Bloomfield, (*k*) Dr. Wells, (*l*) Dr. Manton, (*m*) Dr. Doddridge, (*n*) Saurin, (*o*) Burkitt, (*p*) the Assembly of Divines, (*q*) Bingham, (*r*) and the Edinburgh Presbyterian Reviewers. (*s*) These great and learned Pædo-baptists unhesitatingly confess that in the two passages now under consideration, “there is an indisputable allusion to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion ;” and in so doing they have set an example of candour which is deserving of the imitation of some modern writers, who have endeavoured by their feeble and attenuated criticisms to explain away these unambiguous and forcible testimonies to the propriety of our practice. *

(*a*) Note on vi. Rom. 4. (*b*) Eighteen Serm. p. 297. (*c*) Note on vi. Rom. 4. (*d*) Lectures on Cate. L. 35. (*e*) Works Vol. i. Serm. vii. p. 179. (*f*) Works Vol. iii. p. 896. (*g*) Hard Texts on ii. Colos. 12 edition, 1633. (*h*) Expo. ii. Colos. 12. (*i*) Works Vol. i. 446. edition 1718. (*j*) Note on vi. Rom. 4. (*k*) Notes on Greek Test. in loco. (*l*) On vi. Rom. 4. (*m*) Sermon on vi. Rom. 4. (*n*) Fain. Ex. on vi. Rom. 4. (*o*) Sermon Vol. 3. p. 171. (*p*) Expos. on vi. Rom. 4. (*q*) Annot. on iii. Matt. 6. (*r*) Orig. Eccle. vi., xi., ch. 11. (*s*) Rev. Vol. i. p. 531.

* If the reader would like to see Mr. Ewing’s ridiculous “embalming” theory completely cut to pieces, he has only to turn to Dr. Carson’s work, page 146—154 ; Mr Ewing’s learned and laborious attempt to prove that “burial in scripture is not burial, but a washing, or embalming the dead,” is there without mercy, torn limb from limb.

II. *Baptism is symbolical of the Redeemer's sufferings.*

"Jesus said, I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." (a) Unquestionably the Redeemer here refers to his approaching sufferings; and the point which we have now to consider is, did his sufferings most resemble a sprinkling, pouring, or immersion?

We unhesitatingly answer, an immersion.

We suppose that no one will venture to affirm that sprinkling will afford us a fit representation of the tremendous sorrows of our glorious Redeemer; we are therefore left to choose between pouring and immersion; and of these we contend that the far more significant is the latter. Our Redeemer's sufferings can only be adequately represented by an immersion of the whole body. Pouring water upon the head but feebly symbolizes sorrows like his. "Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow."

The Psalmist David, on an occasion of great affliction, likens his sufferings to an immersion; "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." (b) The 69th Psalm is evidently a prophetic representation of the Redeemer's sufferings, as the reader will discover by consulting the 9th and 21st verses, both of which are quoted and applied to Christ in the New Testament. In the 2d verse of this Psalm, the Saviour's baptism in blood and anguish is beautifully and touchingly described. "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep water, where the floods over-

(a) xii; Luke 50. See also xx. Matt. 22, 23. and x. Mark 38.
(b) xlii Psalm 7.

flow me." Hence it is evident that the Saviour's baptism in suffering was *an immersion*.

Such a mode of expression is justified by the circumstances of the case ; and by all the usages of language. Are we not familiarized with such phrases as these ; "immersed in sorrow ;" "overwhelmed with anguish," &c. And in what case that can be conceived of, may these modes of expression be used with so much force and beauty, as in describing the amazing and unparalleled agonies of the Son of God ? If he were not "immersed in sorrow, and overwhelmed with anguish," who ever was ?

The force of this argument is not at all lessened by the fact that the inferior sufferings of the sons of Zebedee at their martyrdom, are also likened to a baptism or immersion ; (a) since as we have already shewn, it is usual to employ this figure in describing any extraordinary affliction. We therefore contend that the proper way of reading this passage, is "I have an immersion in which to be immersed, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished."

Such metaphorical modes of speech are common in the Holy Scriptures. "All the night make I my bed to *swim*," says David. (b) But no one would venture to assign a new meaning to "swim," because of such an application of the term ; and it is equally absurd to give *baptizo* an additional signification, because it is metaphorically used to denote an immersion in suffering.

(a) xx. Matt. 23. (b) vi. Psalm 6.

CHAPTER V.

THE TESTIMONY OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

We think enough has been said to prove that the only *primitive* mode of baptism was immersion, Dr. Chalmers himself says, "We doubt not that the prevalent style of administration in the Apostles days, was by actually submerging the whole body under water." (a)

And Richard Baxter confesses, that "Baptism then (in the primitive times) was by washing the whole body." (b)

But it may not be uninteresting to the reader if we give a brief compendium of the testimony of ecclesiastical history, upon the subject now under discussion.

All credible historians have unanimously admitted that immersion was the primitive mode of baptism. The celebrated ecclesiastical history of Mosheim, (a Pædo-baptist, be it remembered) is very explicit in the account which it gives of the mode of baptizing in the earlier centuries of the Christian Church. The sacrament of Baptism was administered in this (the first)

(a) Lectures on Epist. to Rom. Vol. ii. ch. 6. (b) Par. on N. T. iii. Matt. 6.

century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." (a) During the second century, "The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed, and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil, and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom, by a solemn invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the express command of our blessed Lord." (b) These statements are confirmed by a reference to the writings of the earlier Fathers, all of whom speak of baptism as immersion, and nothing else.

Justin Martyr, says in his Apology for Christians, written about A. D. 140. "We bring them (converts to some place where there is water, and they are baptized by the same way of baptism by which we are baptized; for they are *washed in the water*, in the name of God the Father," &c. Apolo. ii. Sect. 79.

Tertullian says, that in his day, A. D. 204. "The persons to be baptized in great simplicity were let down into the water, and with a few words said were dipped." "They are immersed in the water," (in aqua merguntur) De Baptismo cap. 2. 4. 7.

The succeeding Fathers, Gregory Nazianzein; Basil, Ambrose, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Chrysostom, whose writings bring us down to about the year 400, all unequivocally testify to the same fact,—and prove that primitive baptism was immersion. (c)

The first recorded case of the substitution of affusion

(a) Mosheim. Cent. i. ch. iv. sect. 8. (b) Mosheim. Cent. ii. ch. v. sect. 13. (c) See Vossius. Disput. De. Baptis. Disp. i. sect. 6. where the Patristical Testimony on the mode of baptism is given at full length, and with great learning.

or pouring for immersion, occurred about the middle of the third century. It is given at length by Eusebius.

“Novatian fell into a dangerous disease, and because he was very likely to die, had water poured or sprinkled all over him in the bed where he lay, if that might be termed baptism.” He however recovered, and in the year 251, became a candidate for the See of Rome. Cornelius, who aspired to the same honour, and proved the successful candidate, wrote a long letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, disparaging the claims and pretensions of his rival Novatian, in which epistle he says ; “Novatian came not canonically to his order of priesthood, much less was he capable of being chosen bishop, for all the clergy and a great many of the laity were against his being chosen presbyter ; because it was not lawful they said, for any one that had been poured over in his bed as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy.”

It appears then, from this fact, that in the primitive church, immersion alone was considered to be baptism ; that even a pouring over of the whole body was only tolerated in cases of extreme peril ; and that not being immersed in baptism was generally considered a sufficient disqualification for any office in the church.

When Cyprian, who lived at the same time as Novatian, was asked by one Magnus, “whether they are to be esteemed right christians who are not washed in the water, but only sprinkled over ?” he answered that “the baptism was to be considered good, necessity compelling it, and God granting his indulgence.” At this time the opinion that baptism was essential to salvation, and obtained the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, very generally prevailed.

Thus Cyprian says in his seventy-third letter, “It is manifest where, and by whom the remission of sins,

which is conferred in baptism, is administered. They who are presented to the rulers of the church, obtain by our prayers and imposition of hands, the Holy Ghost." (a) It was this false notion of the necessity of baptism to salvation, that caused the permission of sprinkling or pouring in cases of extreme danger.

Dr. Wall states that "France seems to have been the first country in the world where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health." Pouring was not tolerated in the church of Rome until the eighth century; while immersion still continued to be the established law of the church. It was not until the sixteenth century that pouring was generally adopted.

The English church retained the ancient mode of baptism longer than those of the continent, as appears from her rituals. Her offices and liturgies all along enjoined dipping, without any mention of pouring or sprinkling. In A. D. 1549, first appeared the exception for "weak" children, four years afterwards the word thrice, after the order to dip was omitted." The following is taken from the office of baptism, as contained in the Prayer Book of 1549, "The Priest shall take the childe in his hands, and ask his name; and naming the childe, shall dyppe it in the water thryse; the first dypping the right side, and the second the left, the thyrde dypping the face towards the fonte; so it be done discretely and warily."

"Edward the VI., son of Henry VIII., and Jane Seymour, born October 12, 1537, was immersed on the following Monday, at Hampton Court. Sponsors, Cranmer, Duke Norfolk, and Queen Mary." (b)

"Queen Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII., and Anne Bolcayne, was born at Greenwich, Sunday, Sep-

(a) See Mosheim. Cent. xxx. ch. iv. sect. 4. (b) Antiq. Repertory. V. 4.

tember 7, 1533, and was baptized by immersion, the Wednesday following. The sponsors were Cranmer, the Duchess of Norfolk, and the Marchioness of Dorset." (a)

Sprinkling did not prevail in England to any extent until about 1550; and from that time it became growingly popular. In 1600, immersion was almost entirely abandoned, though it was still enjoined by the Liturgy, except in cases of sickness. (b) Even to the present day, the offices of the Church of England require dipping when the child is able to bear it. In the Church Catechism, we have the following question and answer; Q. "What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism? A. Water *wherein* the person is baptised." In the service for the private baptism of infants, we meet with these directions: "But if they who bring the infant to the church do make such uncertain answers to the Priest's questions, as that it cannot appear that the child was baptized with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (which are essential parts of baptism,) then let the priest baptize it in the form before appointed for public baptism of infants, saving that, at the dipping of the child in the font, he shall use the following form of words," &c. In the office for the public baptism of infants, it is also enjoined, that "if the parents shall certify that the child is able to endure it, the priest shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily." It is evident therefore, from the book of common prayer, and from history, that the earliest English Reformers, were convinced that immersion is the proper mode of baptism, and I trust

(a) Ex. M. S. in Corp. Christi. Coll. Cambridge, Leland Collect. v. 2. (b) The reader will find all these facts confirmed by a reference to Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. pt. ii. ch. 9.

this fact will have the serious attention of every Episcopalian into whose hands this book may fall, and will lead him to inspect our sentiments upon the other points of the controversy with less prejudice than formerly.

The Eastern or Greek Church, which comprehends in its bosom, a considerable part of Greece, the Grecian Isles, Wallachia, Moldavia, Egypt, Abyssinia, Nubia, Lybia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Cilicia, Palestine, and Russia, and which never acknowledged the usurped supremacy of the Roman Pontif, has always retained, and still retains the ancient practice of immersion. From this they have never swerved, as is evident from all the writings of the Greek Fathers, as well as from indisputable historical facts. It will not however be necessary to adduce any formal proof of the fact, as its veracity is unhesitatingly admitted by those eminent Pædo-baptists themselves, who have examined most learnedly and profoundly the history of baptism. (*a*)

And does the reader require any proof beyond what has been now adduced. Will not the accumulated evidence to which his attention has been drawn, satisfy him that the only scriptural mode of baptism is immersion? In what respect is the proof defective? What additional evidence can honestly be required by the sincere enquirer after truth? If the proof already furnished does not convince, nothing will do so. If we believe not the evangelists and the apostles, neither "should we be persuaded though one rose from the dead!" We venture to affirm, that those hesitators upon the mode of baptism, who require more proof before they are immersed, would in any other case be satisfied with one half the evidence which this ordinance affords. If

(*a*) See Dr. Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. p. 1 ch. ii. Millar Georg. v. ii. p. 480,—and page 32 of this work.

they had one half the certainty of success in any mercantile enterprise, which they have of the propriety of baptism by immersion, they would without fear embark the whole of their fortune and energies in the undertaking. But alas, alas, when obedience to Christ's commandments is required at their hands, a sudden, excessive, and guilty timidity, steals over them; and no possible amount of proof seems sufficient to remove their hesitation.

But say some, cannot we be baptized in any other way than immersion? To this we answer, we have proved that baptism is immersion, and nothing else. The question therefore involves an absurdity; it is like asking can I be immersed in any other way than by immersion? Baptism or immersion, is a perfect act. Any thing less than immersion therefore is not baptism. But it is said that the Mode of Baptism is an insignificant point, not worth contending about. The apostle did not think so, or he would not have exhorted the Thesalonians "to stand fast, and hold the traditions which they had been taught whether by word or epistle." An act may be in itself insignificant, and yet if made a matter of divine command, it becomes important. Its observance then is necessary to obedience; and its neglect exposes us to the charge of rebellion. There was nothing important in the act itself of eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, until the fruit of that tree was forbidden to our first parents by divine authority; but from that time abstinence in this particular case became a virtue, and indulgence a grievous sin. And now the act of immersion has been associated by the express command of Jesus Christ, with the ordinance of initiation into the Christian Church; its observance is an act of holy obedience, and its wilful neglect, when convinced of its propriety, a flagrant sin!—Christ commands it,

and that simple fact renders it any thing but a trifling or insignificant matter !

The same authority is required to repeal, or even to modify, as is required to institute, a ceremony depending solely for its existence upon the will of the great lawgiver of Zion.

The rite of baptism is not a moral precept, arising out of the natural fitness of things, or the adaptation of which to our condition can be ascertained by us, independently of the command of God : it is a ceremony which derives its origin and authority exclusively from the command of Christ ; and while that command remains unrepealed, we have no power or right to modify any of its details. And therefore until Pædo-baptists can produce us in proof that the command of Christ to immerse believers in water upon a profession of their faith, is altered or repealed, evidence as good and weighty, as we can shew that Christ gave and the apostles obeyed that command, we can never consent to deviate in the slightest particular from the law as we find it in the New Testament. Where are we told that Christ has altered his own divine law, by substituting affusion, or sprinkling, for immersion ? We ask for proof, that the same power which *gave*, has *altered* the law ? Christ alone can change his own institutions.

“ The authority of the church and of her ministers, is not *legislative* but *executive* ; it is our province to enforce and to practice the laws of Christ’s kingdom, as we find them in the New Testament ; but to make new laws, or to add to, take from, or modify in any way those already existing we have no authority whatever.” (a)

(a) My own Tract on “ The Church of Christ, independent of all secular authority.” p. 3.

PART II.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

MY OBJECT IN THIS PART OF THE WORK WILL BE TO
SHEW THAT BELIEVERS ALONE ARE SCRIPTURALLY
ENTITLED TO THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARGUMENT FROM BAPTISM AS ADMINISTERED
DURING THE DAYS OF CHRIST.

There seems to be but little difference of opinion upon the subjects of John's Baptism. The scriptures inform us that all whom he immersed, "went out to him;" and "confessed their sins." His baptism is styled "*the baptism of repentance.*" These facts clearly show that babes could not have been included in John's baptism; forasmuch as they could not "go out to him;" "confess their sins;" and "bring forth fruits

meet for repentance." Could infants be fit subjects of a baptism, the evident terms of which were a profession of repentance for sin and of faith in the coming Messiah? (a) Mr. Scott though an Episcopalian, well says in his commentary "That it does not appear that any but adults were baptized by John; adult Jews professing repentance, and a disposition to become the Messiah's subjects, were the *only* persons whom John admitted to baptism." (b)

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them and baptized." (c) "And they came unto John, and said unto him Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." (d) "When therefore the Lord knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus baptized not, but his disciples) he left Judea, and departed into Galilee." (e) From this narrative it appears that those whom Jesus baptized were made disciples previously to their baptism; for Jesus first "*made*," and then "*baptized*," his disciples. Clearly therefore infants could not have been included in his baptism, as they were incapable of discipleship. Mr. Scott, (to whose commentary I have already referred,) frankly admits in his note upon this passage, "That the baptism of Jesus was doubtless of *adults alone*! A marvellous admission, coming as it does from a Pædo-baptist.

But it will be necessary here to notice the manner in which these arguments are parried and evaded, by the assertion that christian baptism did not exist until after Christ's ascension; and that therefore references

(a) See xix. Acts 4. (b) Note on iii. Matt. 5, 6. (c) iii. John 22. (d) iii. John 26. (e) iv. John. 1, 2.

to baptism as administered antecedently to that time, prove nothing to the point in hand.

That there may have been slight and unimportant differences between baptism as administered by John and Jesus, is not improbable, but that those differences were not sufficiently weighty to unchristianize the baptism of John, is perfectly clear. For

I. We are plainly told, that, *the preaching and baptism of John belonged to the new, or Christian dispensation*. Our Lord, when addressing the multitude concerning John, said, "From the days of John the Baptist," (that is from the time that John commenced his public career as a preacher and baptizer,) "until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the law and the prophets prophesied *until John*," (Eos Ioannou.) (a) In this passage Jesus teaches us that the law and the prophets, or in other words, the old dispensation, ceased when John began to preach and baptize; and that from that time, the kingdom of heaven, which was proclaimed in his ministry, suffered violence; the awakened Jews pressing forward with eagerness to a reception of its blessings. John's baptism, therefore, did not belong to the old, but to the new or christian dispensation. The same sentiment was repeated by our Lord on another occasion. When reproving the Pharisees, he said, "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. (b) Here, again, our Lord asserts, that the law and the prophets, which is a phrase expressive of the old dispensation, ceased when John began to preach; and that from the day on which he commenced his ministrations, the kingdom of God, or the Gospel was preached; and

(a) ii. Matt. 12, 13. (b) xvi. Luke 16.

every man eagerly hastened to receive the joyful tidings. These two passages place it beyond doubt, that the preaching and baptism of John belonged to the Gospel dispensation. If then, John's baptism be a part of the christian dispensation, it must be christian baptism, but we are told by Christ himself that John's baptism is a part of the christian dispensation, ergo, John's baptism is christian baptism. If the baptism of John be entirely distinct from the baptism of Jesus, then we have two distinct baptisms in the same dispensation! But this cannot be, for in the Gospel dispensation, there are "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism."

II. The second argument, by which the identity of the baptisms of John and Jesus may be established, is, *the fact, that John and Jesus both preached and baptized at the same time.* After our Lord's interview with Nicodemus, "Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized. And John also was baptizing," (at the same time) "in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came and were baptized. (a) And then, a few verses further on, we read, that "the Jews came unto John while he was baptizing in Enon, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." (b) It is very clear then, from these passages, that John and our Lord both preached and baptized at the same time. This fact it is impossible to deny; and from it we justly infer the identity of the two baptisms. For who can suppose that two distinct baptisms, both accredited by divine testimonials, could be lawfully practised at the same time? John was as truly "sent by God" to

(a) iii. John 22, 23. (b) iii. John 26.

preach and baptize, as was Jesus. He received his commission from the same quarter. His baptism was "not of men, but of God;" it is even called by our Lord himself, "the council of God." If then, there be a radical difference between the two baptisms, here were two distinct baptisms, both of them sanctioned by God, and both accredited by numberless testimonials of their divine origin, in force at the same time! In what an awkward dilemma would this place the pious and enquiring Jew! He might justly reason thus with himself, "Here are two public teachers, both of them evidently sent by God, both preaching and baptizing at the same time, and yet their baptisms are entirely distinct; which am I to follow? Which of the two may justly claim my obedience?" We have only to imagine ourselves living at the time, and we shall instantly perceive how perplexing this question would be to an anxious and enquiring mind. The difficulty however is entirely obviated by supposing that John's baptism was true christian baptism. The fact, then, that John and Jesus baptized at the same time, incontestibly proves that their baptisms are the same.

III. *The terms of John's baptism were the same as those required in christian baptism.* John required two things of those who were candidates for his baptism, a profession of repentance; and a declaration of their faith in the Messiah. This is expressly stated in scripture. "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts xix. 4. These are the identical terms of christian baptism. The apostles required "repentance towards God," and "faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," as prerequisites to a reception of baptism. The only point of difference was, that the Jews whom John baptized

exercised faith in a Messiah whose work was yet to be accomplished ; whereas, those whom the apostles immersed after our Lord's resurrection, believed on the Messiah as having already " finished the work given him to do." But faith, the term itself was the same ; it had respect to the same object, and that object was Christ Jesus. The mere difference, that in the one case it had respect to the Messiah as about to bleed and die ; while in the other it had reference to the Messiah as having already died, is of no importance. Now if John, Christ Jesus and the apostles, required the precise same things as terms of baptism, clearly their baptisms were the same.

IV. The fourth fact which establishes our point, is, *that when John's disciples became followers of Jesus, they were never re-baptized.* Without doubt, many of our Lord's apostles and disciples had been baptized by John, and were never baptized by Jesus. We are expressly informed that two of our Lord's apostles were disciples of John before they followed Jesus ; and yet we are no where told, that they were re-baptized by Christ. We have no evidence in fact, that the apostles ever received any baptism but that of John. If then John's baptism be not christian baptism, clearly the apostles, and most of the primitive christians never received christian baptism, and died without having passed through that ordinance ! Had Jesus re-baptized the disciples of John when they became his followers, it would certainly have been recorded ; so important an event would not have been omitted by the inspired historians. (a) If then, Jesus did not re-baptize the

(a) For an exposition of xix. Acts, 1—7.¹ See my Tract on " The Identity of the Baptisms of John and Jesus." Price 1d., which may be had of the Baptist Tract Society.

the disciples of John, when they became his (Jesus') followers, but allowed them to take their places at once among his disciples, then clearly either John's baptism is Christian baptism; or, Jesus received men and women into discipleship without baptism.

V. *Jesus himself submitted to John's baptism*, and on that solemn occasion, uttered these emphatic words, "Thus it becometh *us*," (me and my followers,) "to fulfil all righteousness." The words of Christ clearly prove that John administered a baptism which it becomes ALL true christians to receive; but if John's baptism were not christian baptism, submission to it would not have been an act of Christian obedience, and consequently, it would *not* become *us*, THUS to fulfil all righteousness.

VI. Mark prefaces his account of John's baptism, with these remarkable words; "*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written,*" &c. But if the preaching and baptism of John, were the beginning of the gospel, they were, doubtless, parts of the christian dispensation, and it must therefore be admitted that John's baptism, was gospel, or christian baptism.

As then it appears, that the baptism of John was christian baptism, it follows, that all the arguments in favour of *adult* baptism by immersion, deducible from *his* practice, may be fairly brought to bear upon the present controversy. Baptism, as administered by John, Christ Jesus, and the Apostles, was *essentially* the same ordinance, for, as has been already observed, in the christian dispensation, there is but "*one baptism.*"

We are at a loss to conceive on what grounds it can have been asserted, that the baptism practised by the apostles, during Christ's residence upon earth, was not christian baptism. The Redeemer presided over, and

directed its administration; it was celebrated by his own apostles, and was intended to be a badge of discipleship to him.—“The Lord made and baptized more disciples than John.” If this were not christian baptism, where shall we look for that ordinance? From these observations, it appears that we have acted honestly in quoting from the accounts of Baptism given in the gospels; and that their testimony must be received as of equal authority with that of the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, in the settlement of this controversy.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARGUMENT FROM CHRIST'S COMMISSION.

Though christian baptism undoubtedly existed before Christ's ascension, yet up to that time, it had been administered only on a limited scale. It had, together with every other gospel privilege been restricted to the pious Jews. This state of things however, was then to pass away, and the gospel and all its privileges were to be diffused through every part of the earth. Under these deeply interesting and momentous circumstances, Jesus delivered his last solemn charge to the Apostles, in which he enjoined them to shake off their Jewish prejudices, and to become from that day Missionaries to a lost and perishing world.

“Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, immersing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”(a) “Go ye into

(a) xxviii. Matt. 28, 29.

all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is immersed, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (a)

There are several things worthy of serious attention in this commission.

I. First. *Men are to be taught and disciplined, before their baptism.* The order enjoined by the Redeemer is, first teach men and thus make disciples of them, and then baptize them. This was the way in which Christ himself had acted during his personal ministry on earth ; he first *made* men disciples and then baptized them. But how can we preach the gospel to, or in any way teach or disciple infants, *before* baptizing them ? Is not the sprinkling of infants first, and the teaching them afterwards, a practical inversion of our Saviour's command, which enjoins hearing the gospel, and discipleship, *before* baptism ? It is absurd to say, that "immersing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," is merely exegetical of the command to "disciple all nations ;" and that the apostles were simply enjoined to make disciples of all nations by baptizing them and their infants. The word "*matheteuo*" means to teach, or to make disciples by teaching ; the passage therefore should read, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of, by teaching, all nations ; immersing them," &c.

The apostles thus understood their divine Master, and invariably disciplined men before baptizing them, as we shall hereafter show.

II. Secondly. *Men are to believe before baptism.* Those whom Matthew calls disciples, are explained by Mark to be believers. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." Hence it is evident that our

(a) xv. Mark 15, 16.

Lord intended a confession of faith in his name, to precede baptism. Upon this point the apostles and their coadjutors never hesitated for one moment. When any person desired baptism, the condition invariably proposed, was, a profession of faith. "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." Infants however cannot make any such profession, and therefore, have clearly no title to baptism.

III. Thirdly. *Our Lord makes no separate provision for the baptism of infants.* He gives only ONE rule of action ; that faith shall precede baptism. He makes no distinct and special reference to the case of infants. He does not add, "and when ye have baptized believing parents, then sprinkle their children." And yet surely, if he had intended, that the children of believers should be sprinkled, he would have introduced a command to that effect in this his last solemn charge to his apostles ! It cannot be supposed, that the Redeemer would have been silent upon so important a point as *this*. But where do we find any thing in Christ's commission about the baptism of infants ? Christ has given us but one rule by which to act, which renders it improper to baptize any but believers.

IV. Fourthly. *This Commission extends to the end of the world.* The promise, "Lo, I am with you always," reaches "even unto the end of the world," from which we may gather, that the precept connected therewith, is intended to be of equal duration. This solemn charge will remain binding upon the Church of Christ, until all the elect of God shall be gathered in. Shall we then be so presumptuous as to alter or modify any of its details ? What daring hand shall interfere with the regulations given us by our exalted Head, in his solicitude and wisdom ?

V. Fifthly. *This regulation is of universal applica-*

tion. It embraces "all nations," and "all the world." "Every creature" to whatever nation he may belong, is to be thus dealt with. He is to be taught, disciplined, and then immersed. Our Saviour does not introduce any clause to suit the convenience of colder climates. He does not say, "the law of immersion is partial, and only applies to warm climates;" but he expressly enjoins believers of "all nations," and in "all the world," to be immersed!

Many judicious Pædo-baptists admit, that nothing can be gathered in favour of infant baptism, from our Saviour's commission. Baxter well says, "This is not like some occasional historical mention of baptism, but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles, for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several works in their several places and order. Their first task, says he, is by teaching to make disciples, who are by St. Mark called believers: the second work is to baptize them, whereto is annexed the promise of their salvation: the third work is to teach them all other things which are afterwards to be learned in the school of Christ." He adds, "To condemn this order, is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, that it is one sort of faith, even saving, that must go before baptism, and the profession whereof the minister must expect." (a)

To the same purpose are the observations of Dr. Ridgley, "Some suppose that we are made disciples by baptism, and afterwards to be taught whatsoever Christ hath cammanded; but I cannot think this sense of the word so defensible or agreeable to the designs of our Saviour. And besides, while we have recourse to this

(a) Disp. to Right to Sacra. p. 91, 149.

sense to defend infant baptism, we do not rightly consider that this cannot be well applied to adult baptism, which the apostles were first to practise: *for it cannot be said concerning the heathen that they are first to be taken under Christ's care by baptism, and then instructed in the doctrines of the gospel by his ministers.*" (a)

Dr. Whitby has the following comment in loco:—
"Teach all nations; that is, preach the gospel to all nations, and engage them to believe it, in order to their profession of that faith by baptism, as seems apparent from the parallel commission in St. Mark: "Go preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." If here it should be said that I yield too much to the baptists, I desire any one to tell me, whether the apostles were not sent to preach to those that could hear, and to teach them to whom they preached, that Jesus was the Christ, and only to baptize them when they did believe this." (b)

(a) Body of Divinity, Quest. 166. (b) See also Poole's Continuations, Annot. in loco.

CHAPTER III.

THE ARGUMENT FROM BAPTISM AS ADMINISTERED BY THE APOSTLES AFTER CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

The first instance of the administration of baptism after the ascension of Christ, is, that of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. The reader is requested to turn to the account given us of this event, in the second chapter of Acts, beginning at the thirty-seventh verse. Four things are stated of the persons baptized on that memorable day ; first, they were pricked to the heart with a sense of their guilt ; secondly, they were solemnly exhorted to repent ; thirdly, they gladly received the word ; fourthly, they continued after their baptism stedfastly in the apostles doctrine. All who were baptized gave credible evidence of repentance and faith ; and therefore, infants being physically incapable of either, could not have been included in the number. No mention is made of the subsequent baptism of the children of the three thousand believers, and yet surely some notice would have been taken of such an event if it really took place. The apostles said nothing to these converted Jews upon the propriety of baptizing their

children, which they certainly would have done, if they had considered infant baptism an ordinance of Jesus Christ.

The Baptism of the Samaritans, is the next which claims our attention, and is thus described:—"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing, and seeing the miracles which he did. And there was great joy in that city. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (a) In these verses it is stated, that "The gospel was preached to the Samaritans;" and that "they heard the word," and "believed the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," before they were baptized. But infants could not have believed in the name of Jesus Christ, nor in the kingdom of God, and therefore, infants were not included in the baptism of Philip. Philip baptized those *only* who were of an age capable of hearing, understanding, and believing the gospel; but infants can neither hear, understand, nor believe the gospel, infants therefore were not baptized by Philip. It is expressly stated, that men and women were baptized by multitudes; but the scripture is altogether silent as to the baptism of *one* infant; and yet if infant baptism were practised at all, it certainly would have been mentioned here.

The fact next demanding our attention, is the baptism of the Eunuch. In this case, as in the other two, the account given is full and particular.

(a) viii. Acts 5, 6, 12.

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the Eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, *if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest*, and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still,” &c. (a) The following things here require our notice: first, Philip preached Christ to the Eunuch; secondly, the Eunuch applied for baptism himself; and thirdly, Philip required a profession of faith, before he thought the Eunuch a fit subject for baptism: “if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest,” (*exestin*) it is lawful.

This implies that it was not lawful in apostolic times to baptize any who did not believe with the whole heart; how it can be lawful *now*, to baptize or sprinkle infants, who, from the necessity of their nature, are incapable of believing at all, is a question which I confess my own inability to answer.

“Many of the Corinthians *hearing, believed*, and were baptized.” (b) Here again the same order was observed. The Corinthians were discipled, that is, they became believers *before* they were baptized. No allusion whatever is made to the baptism of any of their infants.

There are many other scripture cases which we might specify did our limits permit, but we must content ourselves with referring to the baptism of Cornelius and his household. The reader will have the kindness to turn to the conclusion of the tenth chapter of the Acts, where he will find this event fully described. Of the persons baptized on that occasion, it is said, that

(a) viii. Acts 15. (b) xviii. Acts 8.

previously to their baptism, "the Holy Ghost fell on them all;" so that "they spake with tongues, and magnified God." The Apostle Peter, based their right to baptism, upon their reception of the Holy Ghost. (a) It is quite clear therefore, that none but adults were baptized on this occasion. We have no intimation whatever, that after the baptism of Cornelius, and "his kinsmen and near friends," their children were baptized. How happens it that there is not a solitary instance of infant baptism recorded in scripture? If this ceremony were constantly observed in the apostles days, should we not meet with some few instances of its administration? The illustrious Calvin himself admits, "That no such circumstance is expressly mentioned by the evangelists." (b) And the acute Richard Baxter, whom we have already more than once quoted, makes the following manly avowal:—"I conclude that all examples of baptism in scripture do mention only the administration of it to the professors of saving faith; and the precepts give us no other direction; and I provoke any one, as far as it is seemly for me to do, to name one precept or example, for baptizing any other, and make it good if he can." (c)

(a) See x. Acts 47. The baptism of households will be considered in the replies to objections. (b) Insti. Book iv. ch. 16. sect. viii. Calvin's chapters on infant baptism contain the best defence of that ceremony I have yet seen. (c) Disput. of Right to Sac. p. 156.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF BAPTISM.

The intention of Christ in the institution of Baptism, will aid us in forming our opinions upon the persons who are entitled to a participation in the ordinance. Our object in this chapter will be to shew that the signification and intent of baptism can only be realised in the baptism of professed believers; and are completely destroyed by the substitution of infant sprinkling in its place.

I. *In baptism we symbolically and professionally die unto sin, and live unto God.* The reader is here requested to turn to the sixth chapter of Romans, and read from the third to the twelfth verses. In this passage we are said to "be buried with Christ by baptism into death," and to rise, that thenceforth we "should walk in newness of life."

This passage is capable of an easy explanation, if we refer it to the baptism of believers, but it is utterly unintelligible if applied to the sprinkling of infants. When a believer is baptized upon a profession of his

faith, he is publicly entombed with Christ into a death to sin, self, and the world; and he rises from his temporary liquid grave, to walk before the world in a new character, or as it is here expressed, "in newness of life." But, can it be said, that unconscious infants are buried with Christ in their baptism into such a death as this, and, that they rise from the waters of baptism, "to walk in newness of life?" (a)

II. *In Baptism we are buried with Christ, and rise with him through FAITH.* "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (b) In baptism we are not merely symbolically and professionally buried with Christ; but by the power of a divinely implanted faith, we rise with him to a more glorious state of being. By faith, we see that our emersion from the waters of baptism, is emblematic of our resurrection with Christ, to a new life. Sentiments like these will apply to the baptism of a professed believer; but will our Pædo-baptist friends tell us, how a child can "be buried with Christ in baptism," and "rise therein with him through *the faith which is of the operation of God!*" What faith can an infant possess? And if an infant cannot possess faith, how can the signification of baptism, as given in this passage, be realised in his case?

III. *In Baptism we publicly put on Christ, and become professionally his disciples.* Baptism is the appointed badge of christian discipleship. It does not constitute us disciples; but it is the ordinance by which we declare

(a) If the doctrine of baptismal regeneration be true, these words may be applied to baptized infants, but not unless. On no other principle, can this passage, with any propriety, be considered as referring to them. (b) ii. Colos. 12.

ourselves to be so. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." (a) In baptism we testify our faith in the Redeemer, as well as our willingness to be guided entirely by his spirit and word; and solemnly consecrate ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, to his service and glory. But how an infant can be "baptized into Christ" and thus "put on Christ," we confess ourselves unable to perceive! Can an infant make a profession of discipleship in his baptism? And if he cannot, this is but saying in other words, that he cannot be baptized into Christ, nor put on Christ, and that consequently he has no right whatever to be baptized.

IV. *In Baptism we testify our faith in the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead.* "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?" (b) There is an allusion in this passage to the ancient custom of making a brief confession of faith in the resurrection of the dead, previously to baptism. The convert was baptized as it were into this great doctrine. By descending into, and arising from the grave of baptism, he gave a significant and public evidence of his belief of this fundamental truth of our holy religion. The christians of the Apostle's day were eminently exposed to peril. They knew not but that they might be hurried from the waters of baptism, to the place of martyrdom. Their profession of christianity at once marked them as victims; and from the moment they became disciples, they were hourly liable to a cruel and ignominious death. Without faith in the certainty of their resurrection, they would have been "of all men the most miserable." Hence the peculiar propriety of

(a) iii. Gal. 27. (b) 1 Corin. xv. 29.

their declaration of faith in the resurrection, at their baptism, the hour of their entrance upon this career of danger. But how can an infant testify his faith in the resurrection, at his baptism? With what propriety can the passage now under consideration be applied to any but believers? The intension of baptism as here stated, is frustrated, by the administration thereof to an unconscious infant, who cannot concern himself at all whether the dead rise or not!

V. *True christian baptism is connected with the answer of a good conscience towards God.* "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh,) but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (a) It was usual as Cyprian and other ancient writers testify, to interrogate the catechumen previously to his baptism, concerning "his faith in Christ, and his renunciation of Satan, the works of darkness, and all the vanities of the world;" and to this custom the apostle here refers.

When the catechumen replied to these solemn queries with honesty, and with a good conscience towards God, it was evident that he was in a state of salvation. And it was being able thus by grace, to answer such interrogations, that saved his soul, not the mere lustration of his body in water. But how an infant can have the answer of a good conscience in baptism, we confess our inability to perceive! An infant's conscience is not yet developed, and cannot act in any way. Here again we see, that the end of the institution of baptism is defeated by its administration to infants!

VI. *Baptism is a symbol of the remission of our sins* "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized,

(a) 1 Peter iii. 21.

and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." (a) This passage is clearly inapplicable to infants; can they "arise," and "call upon the name of the Lord," and thus "wash away their sins," in baptism? can baptism be to them an emblem of their ablution in the blood of Jesus? Dr. Doddridge says in loco, "Baptism in the adult, (excepting the very peculiar instance of our Lord,) was a token of confession and humiliation for sin, on which account it is called "the baptism of repentance," and of a desire to be cleansed from it as the body was by water cleansed from its pollution; and being administered to such professed penitents by divine appointment, as a token of favourable regard to them, it was a seal of pardon; nor did God ordinarily give any particular person any public and visible token of pardon till he submitted to baptism; and this may explain in what sense baptism might be said to wash away sins, and elsewhere to save."

With this exposition we in some particulars do not agree. Baptism is not a *seal*, but an *emblem* of our cleansing in the blood of Jesus. Dr. Doddridge however admits all we wish here to prove, viz;—that this passage is incapable of application to any but adults. For this is but admitting in other words, that they only have a title to baptism; unless indeed we maintain that there is another kind of baptism ordained to suit the circumstances of infants, widely different from that which is here referred to.

But we cannot meet with any reference to two such diverse baptisms in the New Testament; nor can our Pædo-baptist brethren produce proof of their existence.

(a) Acts xxii. 16.

On the contrary in the church of Christ there is "but one baptism."

VII. *Baptism is a fulfilling of Righteousness.* "THUS it becometh us," (said our adorable Jesus at his baptism,) "to fulfil all righteousness." (a) What was becoming in Christ, is also becoming in his followers. Our Saviour in these words proclaims a general truth, which is intended to be applied to every convert. By his example and precept, Jesus taught every believer, that, he is bound to be baptized. "THUS," therefore, "it becometh us," and all "who know the Lord," to "fulfil all righteousness." But can an unconscious infant fulfil any act of righteousness in his baptism? Can a babe perform *any* act of intelligent obedience to the Divine will? And if this be impossible, he is clearly an unfit subject for christian baptism.

VIII. *We are baptized "by the authority, and into the faith, profession, and worship, of the eternal Father, Son, and Spirit."* Dr. Guyse. This is comprehended in our baptism in or into (*eis*) the name of the sacred Trinity. By this solemn ordinance we are immersed into the christian faith, and declare our subjection to its authority. But infants can have no faith; they cannot possibly profess, nor believe in, nor worship, the names of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and are therefore unfit subjects for christian baptism. As Mr. Craps well observes in his tract on baptism, "Infants can neither *be* what baptism *implies*, nor *do* what it *requires*." Is not the inference then unavoidable, that, Christ never intended them to be baptized?

IX. *Baptism is the appointed ordinance of admission into the visible Church.* As circumcision was the rite of initiation into the Jewish Church; so is baptism into

(a) iii. Matt. 15.

the Christian. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (a) The apostle does not here refer to "the baptism of the Spirit" as it is usually called, which was restricted to the communication of extraordinary and miraculous gifts; and was only limited and partial in its extent; but rather to baptism in water upon a profession of faith. "The baptism of the Spirit," is invariably connected in the Scriptures, with the communication of miraculous powers, it is never applied to his ordinary regenerating influences. But it could not be said, that, a reception of the *extraordinary* influences of the Spirit, was indispensable to admission into the church. The apostle's meaning evidently is, that, by the grace of the Spirit we are made fit subjects for the ordinance which admits us into the visible church, and are brought to submit to its authority; and, that after our admission, we continue to partake of the Spirit's reviving influences, just as we from time to time drink of the sacramental cup.

The question therefore, to be now considered is, what kind of a society is the visible church, and are infants fit persons for admission into its bosom?

The Church of England well defines a christian church in her nineteenth Article. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." In agreement with this are all the descriptions given us of the apostolic churches. The primitive churches consisted of persons who were "not of the world, but

(a) 1 Corin. xii. 13.

were chosen out of the world," who "were beloved of God and called to be saints," who "obeyed from the heart that form of inspired doctrine which was delivered them," who were "sanctified," and "faithful in Christ Jesus," and were "called to the fellowship of God's dear Son. (a) All the epistles addressed to the apostolic churches style their members "saints and faithful brethren," and solemn charges are given to them to expel from their communion every carnal and inconsistent member; "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." (b) "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (c)

And is an infant a fit person for admission into such a society as this? In short can an infant be a member of the visible church? Is the thing possible? Is an infant a saint, or a faithful brother? Has he been called to the fellowship of God's dear Son? Has he obeyed from the heart that form of inspired doctrine delivered to us in the scriptures? Can he have communion with the members of Christ's kingdom? The idea of infant membership with the church is supremely ridiculous. But if infants are unfit for membership with the church, what right have they to the ceremony which initiates into the church? Can it be right to give them the ordinance of admission, if they are physically incapable of membership? They are not in fact practically recognised as members of the church, by any body of christians. The Established Church does not admit them to the Lord's table, nor to any privilege of church membership; but requires them to be confirmed, &c., previously to their reception.

(a) Consult the epistles to the churches for proof. (b) 1 Corin. v. 7.
(c) 1 Corin. v. 13.

The Congregational Churches pursue the same line of conduct. They do not receive children to membership; but require of them, in after years, the same evidence of conversion to God, as they expect from an unbaptized person: in fact they make no distinction. Both the Established and Congregational churches practically regard baptized infants as unfit for admission into the church; and confer upon them no privilege of church membership. They place their baptized infants in the same condition as the catechumens of the primitive church, and require a profession of christianity in riper years, antecedently to their admission.

They, however, invert the ancient order, in one important particular. The catechumens in the Apostolic church were never baptized until the *termination* of their catechumenate. They were prepared for baptism during their probation, and were not baptized until they were considered fit for admission to all the immunities and blessings of membership. The baptism of infants at the *commencement* of their catechumenate, is, a complete inversion of the apostolical order.

It is difficult to conceive in what sense it can be said, that, baptized infants are members of the church. It cannot be known whether they belong to the invisible church, whose names are written in heaven, for many infants grow up to manhood, and die in their sins; nor can it be said, that they belong to the visible church, for that, is a society of professed believers, and is of such a nature, that, infants are *incapable* of membership therewith. Their membership therefore is a fiction, invented to cover the deformity of Pædo-baptism. But the garment is flimsy and thin, and will not conceal the fact, that Pædo-baptism, is not an ordinance of Christ, but an invention of man.

The writer is a believer in the salvation of infants

who die such ; but he does not rest his belief in that important truth, upon their supposed regeneration at baptism ; nor upon their pretended membership with the visible church ; but solely upon their secret interest in the covenant of redemption. This however, gives them no title to admission into the Church of Christ on earth ; for the only terms of admission into this society are, faith, and Baptism upon a profession of faith. Paul's secret interest in the covenant of redemption, antecedently to his calling, gave him no title to baptism and church membership.

CHAPTER V.

THE ARGUMENT FROM THE ONENESS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

It is emphatically asserted by the Apostle, that in the christian church, "there are one body, and one spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*, and one God and Father of all." (a) That the one baptism here specified, is baptism in water into the name of the sacred Trinity is evident. It is placed in the list immediately after effectual calling and faith; which is just the place that baptism is intended to occupy in the christian church. *The one spirit of which all-believers are made partakers is mentioned in a previous place.* Besides if the baptism of the Spirit be the *one baptism* here specified, the Quakers are right in rejecting water baptism altogether. This passage affirms that in the christian church there is but one baptism, which is permanent and of universal obligation; but if water baptism, and the baptism of the spirit are both perpetual, then clearly there are two baptisms. Hence it appears,

(a) Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6.

that the baptism of the spirit was only temporary, and limited in its existence, being confined to the apostolic age.

Christian baptism then is but *one*. It is one in its *mode*;—but we have proved that mode to be *immersion*, consequently pouring and sprinkling are not baptism: and it is one in its *subjects*;—but we have proved that they ought to be *believers*, consequently the sprinkling of infants is not baptism. Pædo-baptists have two baptisms. When their missionaries sprinkle a converted heathen upon a profession of his faith, so far as the subject is concerned, they practise the one baptism of the apostles; but this will not suffice them, they must have another baptism, that of babes! The converted heathen's children, if he has any, must all be sprinkled with their parent! and what we ask our readers, can be more dissimilar than the baptism of a believer upon a profession of his faith, and the baptism of a helpless and unconscious babe! Are the two ceremonies in the slightest degree alike? Are they not two invincibly incongruous baptisms?

The Pædo-baptists therefore, clearly practise two baptisms; one, the baptism of converts upon a profession of their faith, and the other the baptism of infants who have no faith! Both cannot be included in the one baptism specified by the apostle; consequently one of them must be a human invention. But Pædo-baptists admit the propriety of baptizing adults upon a profession of their faith; therefore they must give up the baptism of infants as unscriptural. All the passages of holy writ which refer to christian baptism speak of it as but *one*. There is no hint of the existence of two kinds of baptism. It is said of ALL the baptized, "that, they put on Christ, were buried with Christ, and rose to newness of life" in their *baptism*. Now, these things

may be said of a baptized believer. All the references to baptism in the scriptures will explain, if applied to a baptized believer; but they will not explain, when applied to a baptized infant. Can any thing more clearly prove, that, infant baptism is not the "*one baptism*" of the New Testament. Pædo-baptists must either prove, that, believers baptism and infant baptism are identical; or they must confess that they practise *two* baptisms; or, (which will be better than either,) they must give up infant baptism, and be content with the one baptism of believers upon a profession of their faith!

CHAPTER VI.

THE ARGUMENT FROM ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Reference to ecclesiastical history, is not *essential* to the decision of the question discussed in these pages, though it may serve to cast some light upon the origin and history of Infant Baptism.

We consider the matter to be settled, when we have ascertained the verdict of the New Testament. It is evident, that the apostacy of the church commenced at a very early age. Many corruptions existed even in the apostles' times, as several of the epistles abundantly prove. Nothing therefore, can be recognized by us as binding upon the church of God, for which the clear sanction of apostolical precept or practice, cannot be produced. "To the law, and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them."

Though it could be proved that infant baptism existed in the *earliest* ages of the church; yet if *scripture* precept, or precedent cannot be produced in its defence, it must be rejected along with all the other mummery

of the man of Sin. Infant baptism is not in the scriptures, and therefore must be designated an act of "will worship."

Let it then, be distinctly understood, that in writing this chapter, we are doing a work of super-errogation. We do not consider it necessary to the decision of the point in debate; we take our stand upon the solid rock of scripture, and on this immoveable basis we rest our cause. The controversy is settled, when the mind of the Spirit has been ascertained.

We meet with no reference to the existence of infant baptism until after the year 200. At that time, the opinion began to prevail, that baptism purchased the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and, (as we have before stated,) this produced the toleration of pouring in cases where immersion was impossible. But the effect of this erroneous view of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation, gradually produced another deviation from the laws of Christ, and originated *the baptism of infants*. It was thought necessary that they should be baptized in order to their safety, especially when they were weak and likely to die. But for two centuries after Christ, we have undoubted evidence, that *none but believers were baptized*. Dr. Mosheim, in his history of the first and second centuries, states, that the ordinance of baptism was then administered solely to converts. In his history of the second century, you find the following passage. "The sacrament of baptism was administered publicly twice every year, at the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, or Whitsuntide, either by the bishop or presbyters, in consequence of his authorization and appointment. The persons that were to be baptized, after *they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins*, and particularly the devil, and his pompous allurements, *were immersed*

under water, and received into Christ's kingdom, by a solemn invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the express command of our blessed Lord. After baptism, they received the sign of the cross, were anointed, and by prayers, and imposition of hands, were solemnly commended to the mercy of God, and dedicated to his service; in consequence of which they received milk and honey, which concluded the ceremony. The reasons of this particular ritual, coincide with what we have said in general, concerning the origin and causes of the multiplied ceremonies that crept from time to time into the church. Adult persons were prepared for baptism by abstinence, prayer, and other pious exercises. It was to answer for them, that sponsors or god-fathers were first instituted, though they were *afterwards* admitted in the baptism of infants." (a) Salmasius and Suicerus as quoted in Pæd. Exam., both admit, that, "in the two first centuries no one was baptized except being instructed in the faith and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer; because of those words "he that believeth and is baptized." (b) Curcellæus, a learned divine of Geneva, and professor of divinity, as quoted in the same work, confesses, that "the baptism of infants, in the two first centuries after Christ, *was altogether unknown*; but in the third and fourth, was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages, it was generally received. In the former ages, no trace of it appears, *and it was introduced without the command of Christ.*" (c) In the same elaborate work, there is the following quotation from that learned Pædo-baptist divine, Venema. "Tertullian, (who wrote about the year 204,) has nowhere

(a) Cent. 2. chap. iv. sect. 13. (b) Pædo. Exam. vol. ii. p 76.
(c) Pædo. Exam. vol. ii. p 76.

mentioned pædo-baptism among the traditions and customs of the church, that were publicly received, and usually observed; for in his book, *De Baptismo*, he dissuades from baptizing infants, and proves that the delay of it to a more mature age is to be preferred. Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian, seeing there is not any where, in more ancient writers, that I know of undoubted mention of infant baptism." The same great writer, (Venema) remarks; "Tertullian dissuades from baptizing infants, which he certainly would not have done, if it had been a tradition, and a public custom of the church, seeing he was very tenacious of traditions; nor, had it been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it." (a) It seems then, that infant baptism did not make its appearance in the christian church, until after the year 200; and that when it is first mentioned, it is alluded to as a decided innovation upon the ancient and ordinary custom; and as something quite unknown to Christ and his apostles, and destitute of their authority. *In a word, it is only mentioned to be reprobated.* Tertullian opposes both the baptism of infants, and the use of sponsors. These are his words, "what necessity for bringing sponsors into danger, who being themselves mortal, may fail of performing their promises, or may be beguiled by the growth of an ill disposition? The Lord indeed says—"Forbid them not to come to me." Let them come when they grow up—let them come when they learn—when they are taught to what they should come—let them be christians when they shall be capable to know Christ."

From history it likewise appears; that from this time infant baptism *gradually* insinuated itself into the

(a) Pædo. Exam. vol. ii. p 79.

church, together with other errors, such as the essentiality of baptism to salvation, the consecration of the baptismal water, the use of sponsors or godfathers, the imposition of hands at baptism, and the use of material unction at confirmation. All these ceremonies, together with the baptism of infants, were unheard of, until the time of Tertullian, A. D. 204, and were evidently introduced about that period. After this, these errors obtained more general circulation, and ultimately overran the greater part of the christian church; but, we repeat it; until the close of the second century, the baptism of infants was unknown throughout the christian world.

In the middle of the third century, Cyprian wrote largely in favour of infant baptism in an epistle to Fidus. And what think you gentle reader are the reasons which he urges for its practice? Does he adduce scriptural precept or precedent? The following is his argument, "none is to be kept back from baptism and the grace of God, and much less new born infants, who in this respect do deserve more of our aid, and God's mercy; because in the beginning of their birth, they presently crying and weeping, do nothing else than pray"! This is a genuine specimen of patristical argumentation! were it not a subject with which the honour of God is concerned, such a reason might well provoke our laughter. And yet this *powerful* vindication of infant baptism, was signed by Cyprian himself and sixty-six bishops gathered together in council. He further says, "the mercy and grace of God, are to be denied to none that are born of man, for the Lord saith in the gospel, that the Son of Man came not to destroy men's souls but to save them; and therefore as much as in us lies, if it may be, no soul is to be lost; and therefore infants are at all times to be baptized."

These are the very FIRST arguments that are to be met with in favour of infant baptism. They are built

upon the doctrine, that baptism confers the grace of God, and is absolutely indispensable to salvation. They arose out of a misinterpretation of the fifth verse of the third of John, and satisfactorily expose the erroneousness of the practice which they were intended to defend. (a)

In Cyprian's time they actually admitted infants to the Lord's supper, and used to rub the lips of these baby communicants with the consecrated elements. This superstitious and ridiculous practice continued for about six hundred years; and was at last rejected by a council; (b) would that its twin sister, *infant baptism*, had been abolished at the same time. Augustine, who flourished in the fifth century, strenuously advocated the propriety of infant baptism; but the argument which he adduced was not taken from the scriptures, but the authority of Cyprian, and the necessity of baptism to salvation; "neither salvation nor eternal life," says he, "is to be hoped for by any without baptism—it is in vain promised to infants without it." (c) Augustine himself was not baptized until he was about thirty years of age, though he had been educated as a christian by his pious mother Monica. He tells us, indeed, that when young, he fell sick, and his mother and he both desired that he should be baptized, but upon his recovery it was deferred. Augustine's own son was not baptized until he was fifteen. These and other circumstances, clearly shew, that infant baptism was not at first universally practised, even by those who recognised its propriety in cases of extreme danger. The error gradually overspread the christian church,

(a) It is quite uncertain whether this council was really held: there have been many disputes among the learned as to the truth of its existence. (b) As Maldonat confesses on vi. John 53. (c) De Peccatis, cap. 24.

until it was all but universally received. This is not to be wondered at, when we consider that baptism was generally considered to be essential to salvation, as early as about the year 250 ; that the church was being rapidly overrun with numberless other errors which were as readily received as this ; that the clergy had attained such power over the people as to give them amazing facilities for the diffusion of the most dangerous heresies ; and that the people generally speaking were grossly ignorant and superstitious, and consequently easily duped by their ecclesiastical oppressors.

The Baptism of infants as practised by the Established Church of these realms, very closely resembles the first infant baptism of which we read.

The Church of England, be it remembered, in her catechism, boldly says, "that Christ has ordained two sacraments in his church as generally *necessary to salvation*." She regards both baptism and the supper of the Lord, in the same light as did Cyprian, and in conformity with this notion, states, at the commencement of her burial service, that "the office ensuing is not to be used for any that die *unbaptized*, or excommunicated," &c. This was the same deadly error which caused the introduction of infant baptism. Regarding baptism in the same light as the Church of England does now, "as necessary to salvation," and fearful lest their offspring should die unbaptized, the ancients were perplexed as to the manner of giving their children a title to the ordinance. They knew well that faith should precede baptism, and not being able to find it in a helpless infant, they hit upon the expedient of introducing sponsors, who were to engage, that should the child grow up and reach maturity, he should become a christian ! while, on the other hand, if he died in infancy, the faith of the sponsors was to be reckoned to

his account, and by the merits of this vicarious faith, he was to enter heaven! Their practice proceeded upon the general principle, that faith must precede baptism; but as this faith could not possibly be found in the baptized person, it was found in a sponsor. Now it appears to us that this is just the case with the Church of England. *Hers is the baptism of those who believe by proxy; of those who exercise a vicarious faith.* Still she recognizes the general principle, that faith should go before baptism; but not being able to find it in an *infant*, she looks for it from a *godfather*; in the absence of a personal, she accepts a representative faith!

“In the Midsummer number for 1838, of the British Critic, and Quarterly Theological Review, which is generally understood to express the prevailing sentiments of the hierarchy, there is an elaborate article on justification, in which, there is a curious passage respecting the baptism of infants. After shewing, that in the case of adults, the offices of the church require faith as a pre-requisite to baptism, the Review adds, “So much for the baptism of adults. The case of infants indeed bears a different aspect; and if we had been left solely to the guidance of our own judgment, we might perhaps have been induced to think, that the whole spirit and design of the gospel, would have been better consulted, and more consistently followed out, by leaving our children in the state of catechumens, (a term applied in the first century to persons who were in a state of probation, previous to their admittance into the church,) until they should be of age to make a profession of faith for themselves. The church, however, has interpreted the mind of the Spirit, by her immemorial practice. On the one hand, she accepted the faith of the catechumen, who might chance to die before baptism could be administered. And, on the

other hand, she has always received into her bosom, those who are too young for repentance or belief, and has accepted a vicarious profession of faith on their behalf; even as our blessed Lord himself was pleased to heal the helpless paralytic, when he saw the faith of those who brought him to be healed. But, even in so doing, she manifestly recognizes the general principle, that belief is a necessary antecedent; and declares that two things are properly requisite in them that are to be baptized; *repentance*, whereby they forsake sin; and *faith*, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God." It appears, then, that the orthodox party of the Church of England teach, first, that there is a discrepancy between the baptism of infants and the genius of the gospel; secondly, that as faith and repentance are the necessary antecedents of baptism, sponsors are absolutely required to render the baptism of infants available; and thirdly, that the foundation of infant sprinkling, is not the revealed will of Christ; but the practice and authority of the church; the church interpreting the mind of the Spirit, and accepting the vicarious profession." But where shall we find a scriptural warrant for sponsorship? Where is a vicarious faith or repentance spoken of in the word of God? What divine sanction can be adduced for this unseemly farce? The language, the exhortations, the promises, the very genius of christianity, are personal;—"he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." But the whole genius of this ceremony is representative, and the unconscious babe has a certain number of deputies, to represent him before the high court of heaven. It is repentance, faith, and religion by proxy, as if men and women could go to heaven by proxy! Besides, we ask, are godfathers and godmothers much better than perjured, seeing they

solemnly promise that for others which they cannot perform for themselves? They engage, that "the child shall love the Lord his God, with all his heart, and keep all his holy commandments;" while, at the same time, their own tenth Article declares, that "the condition of man after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God;" and their ninth Article expressly states, that "man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is, by his own nature, inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath." And yet, with these articles before them, godfathers and godmothers dare to promise, and priests dare to accept the promise; that the child shall repent, shall exercise faith, and love the Lord his God, with all his heart, and keep all his holy commandments! If this be not perjury, where shall we find it? *Were the Church of England to do away with the use of sponsors*, her own articles and formularies would make her a baptist church, for they require all that we require; *repentance towards God, and faith in Christ before baptism*; and that baptism should be by *immersion*.

The most eminent divines of the Church of Rome admit, that the baptism of infants can only be defended by the traditions of the church. The greatest writers of the *Roman Catholic Church*, have always confessed, that the scriptures contain no warrant for the baptism of infants; and are quite willing to base their practice simply upon the authority of their traditions. In this they have the advantage over the votaries of the Church of England, and others, who practise infant sprinkling, and yet deny the authority of tradition. Dr. Wiseman, professor in the University of Rome, writes, "I pass over two or

three other passages that might be brought in favour of purgatory, upon one of which I shall have to comment a little later. All these texts you will say, are, after all, obscure, and do not lead to any certain results. True, but we have enough said in them to guide us to some very striking probabilities; these require further elucidation, and where shall we look for it but in the church, especially in ancient times. Take, as a similar instance, the sacrament of baptism, as preached now in the church. The apostles were simply told to baptize all nations; but how do you prove from this, that baptism is to be conferred on infants? And yet the English Church Articles prescribe this infant baptism. Or, whence comes the warrant for departing from the literal meaning of the word, *which means immersion*, and the adoption of mere affusion or sprinkling of the water? There may have been infants in the families or houses spoken of as baptized, probably so, surely not enough to base an important practice on it, which without better authority should seem to contradict our Saviour's command of faith preceding or accompanying baptism, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." And in a positive institution, wholly depending on the will of the legislator, positive authority is required for any modification of the prescribed act. Where is the security for these modifications, if not in the explanations of the church conveyed to us by her ancient practices." (a) Thus we see that the greatest living divine of the Romish Church, admits, that infant baptism cannot be proved from scripture; but he, as a catholic, and a believer in the equal authority of the traditions of the church with scripture, is consistent with himself in his practice. But those are inconsistent, not only

(a) Lectures vol. ii. p 5.

with scripture but with themselves, who, as protestants, reject the authority of tradition, and yet retain this rite. They retain traditionary *rites and forms*, and yet reject tradition. The catholic is honest in avowing that scripture contains no sanction for the baptism of infants, and in pleading tradition as his authority; but he is scarcely honest who retains the ceremony, and yet denies the sole basis of its authority. In the authenticated report of the discussion between the Rev. T. D. Gregg, (a protestant,) and the Rev. Thomas Maguire, (a romanist,) which report is published by the church party at Dublin, and is authenticated by the signature of the protestant champion, the catholic asks the episcopalian this knotty question:—"If the scriptures be the *sole rule* of faith, as you say they are, how will you prove *from them*, the lawfulness of infant baptism; or give me your authority for aspersion instead of immersion?" An awkward question indeed for an Episcopalian to answer!

PART III.

OBJECTIONS TO THE EXCLUSIVE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS CONSIDERED.

CHAPTER I.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

When the advocates of Pædo-baptism are driven from every argument which they produce from the New Testament, they usually fly to the Abrahamic covenant, as to their Palladium. Here they imagine themselves securely sheltered from all our assaults. They argue, that the "covenant made with Abraham was made also with his seed;" that "this covenant was substantially the same as the covenant of grace," and that as the "children of the Jews were circumcised, the children of believers ought to be baptized."

It will be unnecessary for us to weary the mind of the reader by entering into an exhibition of the various theories upon the nature and privileges of the Abrahamic covenant, with which our Pædo-baptist brethren have deluged the christian public. We shall prefer

proceeding at once to shew, that to argue from circumcision to christian baptism, is egregious folly. Circumcision has no more connexion with christian baptism, than any other Old Testament rite.

I. *Circumcision was administered only to the male children of the Jews, while baptism is administered to both sexes.* If the covenant made with Abraham was the covenant of grace, and if circumcision was its seal, then clearly the female children of the Jews were destitute of this seal, and their souls were left to the uncovenanted mercies of God! But baptism is to be administered equally to male and female. Circumcision was a *national* ordinance, and as such, might with propriety be administered only to males, they being usually regarded as the representatives of the whole commonwealth. But, in Christ Jesus, there is neither Jew nor Greek, *male* nor *female*. Baptism is confined to no nation or sex. Wherever there is faith, there exists a valid title to the ordinance.

II. *It was obligatory upon all the Jews, whether they were believers or infidels, to have their male children circumcised.* The priest was allowed to make no distinction; but whatever the character of the parents might be, he was obliged to perform this rite upon their offspring. But those who practise infant baptism will not administer that rite to any but children who have believing parents, or who have sponsors to answer for them.

III. *The men servants and slaves of a household were all commanded to be circumcised with their master, upon pain of being cut off from the people, or put to death.* But who is there that believes this is the case with the ordinance of baptism? Who will maintain that when a man believes upon Christ, not only are all his children to be baptized, but all his *male* ser-

vants, and that upon pain of death? According to the hypothesis, that baptism is of the same nature as circumcision, if a West India planter should embrace the gospel, every male negro on his premises should be baptized; or, if he refused, be put to death!

IV. *Though our blessed Lord had received the Jewish rite in his infancy, yet he was baptized in his riper years.* This proves that there is a distinction between the two ceremonies, or, where the necessity for the observance of both? All the earlier converts to christianity being Jews, had been circumcised in their infancy, and yet, when they embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, they were *baptized*, upon a profession of their faith.

V. *It cannot with propriety be said that circumcision was a type of baptism.* Both circumcision and baptism are types, and no type can be the type of a type.

The Apostle Paul tells us what circumcision typified; "In Christ we are circumcised with *the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*, by the circumcision of Christ." The circumcision of Christ is one "made without hands:" it therefore cannot be infant baptism; for infant baptism is a ceremony as truly performed *with hands*, as was circumcision. That which circumcision typified, was not baptism, but "the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." True indeed, circumcision and baptism are both typical of the same thing; but the one is not typical of the other.

VI. Suppose we were to grant that baptism came in the room of circumcision, we have one question to ask the Pædo-baptists; *To which seed of Abraham is the new ordinance of baptism to be administered? his natural or his spiritual seed?* Now let our opponents think well before they reply. *They must choose one of the two alternatives.* Do they answer "To Abraham's

natural seed?" then they must baptize none but Jews, for they *only* are Abraham's natural seed. But if they choose the other alternative, their cause is equally defeated; for then they must confine baptism to *believers*; for *they only* are Abraham's spiritual seed. Abraham was a spiritual father exclusively "to those who believe," to "those who obtain like precious faith with himself." Hence our Redeemer justly charged the *unbelieving* Jews, with not being Abraham's children. They were his *natural* but not his *spiritual* seed. Let our Pædo-baptist brethren, then, take which horn of this dilemma they please; their argument from the Abrahamic covenant is ground to powder and scattered to the winds of heaven. In fact, we have turned their weapon upon themselves, and made it pierce the very vitals of their theory. Either they must baptize none but *Jews*, or none but *believers*. The children of believers are neither Abraham's natural nor his spiritual seed; and therefore no argument can be drawn from the Abrahamic covenant in favour of their baptism. If the argument is of any force, it tells *against* instead of *for* infant baptism!

VII. *The New Testament Church is widely different in its members, ordinances, and nature, from the Old Testament Church.* The Old Testament Church consisted of the whole body of the Jewish people; and its members were entitled to admission by *birth* and by *circumcision*. Its ordinances, its worship, and its sacrifices, were all typical of "better things to come." No change of heart, and no faith in God's promises were required in order to admission within its pale. Every Jew was *ipso facto*, a *member*. Now infant circumcision was a very proper ordinance of initiation into such a church as this. A *national* initiatory ordinance, well became a national church. A Hebrew *infant*, was as truly a son

of Abraham, as the full grown man, and therefore, equally entitled to the ordinance of circumcision. But the Church of Christ is a society of entirely a different character. Members are admitted within her pale, not by a *carnal* but by a *spiritual birth*. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." The New Testament Church is a spiritual society, and if at any time carnal members creep into her bosom, she is unhesitatingly to eject them. She is compared to "a chaste virgin, espoused unto Christ." Her ordinances are *spiritual*, and such as only renewed characters can lawfully celebrate. The new birth gives a right to baptism, and the new birth and baptism united, give a title to admission into the church. Carnal descent from Abraham, and circumcision, occupied the same place under the Old Testament, as the new birth and baptism do under the New. An infant is incapable of membership with the christian church, and therefore has no right to the ordinance which initiates into that sacred society. Prove that an infant belongs to the spiritual seed of Abraham, and that he is capable of fellowship with the church of God, and then you will prove his right to baptism. But does it follow that because infants were admitted into the Jewish church, therefore they should be admitted into the Christian?

The Jewish church consisting of all the carnal posterity of Abraham, was a *type* of that church the members of which are "a royal generation, a holy priesthood, and a peculiar people." Infants might be admitted into the former, but they are incapable of membership with the latter.

VIII. *There is clear evidence, that the apostles neither preached nor practised infant baptism as a substitute for infant circumcision.* We are prepared to show, that such a ceremony as infant baptism coming in the room

of infant circumcision was unknown in the Apostle's days. This is more than we are bound to prove by the legitimate rules of controversy. Our opponents assert, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, in the place of infant circumcision; and we deny it. Now, the *onus probandi* clearly lies upon them. They must prove their affirmative before we can be justly called upon to prove our negative. But this they cannot do, for no passage of scripture can be found to sustain their position; and in the absence of proof on their part, their assertion falls to the ground, and our negative is virtually proved.

We are, however, both willing and able, in this controversy, to do a work of super-erogation; and shall prove by a simple fact, that infant baptism as a substitute for infant circumcision, could not have been taught or practised by the Apostles.

If the Apostles had preached or administered the baptism of infants, as a substitute for the circumcision of infants, how can we account for the unceasing disputes with which the New Testament Church was convulsed respecting the continuance of circumcision? The wranglings of the early christians upon this point, clearly shew, that in their days, infants were not the subjects of a rite corresponding with circumcision. If the apostles had preached infant baptism as a substitute for circumcision, the latter would immediately have died a natural death. Suppose a case by way of illustration. Here is a Jew converted to christianity; he has been in the habit of having his children, as they were born, circumcised according to the law of Moses; a child is born to him after his conversion, and now the question arises, "what am I to do with respect to the circumcision of this babe?" He is, however, taught by the apostles, that a new ceremony, *infant baptism*, has come

in the room of infant circumcision; that his duty is, to have his children *baptized*; and that this will be a sufficient substitute for their circumcision. Now we ask, what difficulty could he feel in determining how to act? Would not every scruple be removed, and would not infant circumcision be abandoned by him without a question? *But the perpetual strifes concerning the continuance or abandonment of circumcision which existed in the Apostle's days, prove that there was then no corresponding ordinance for infants in the christian church.*

On one occasion the Apostles and Elders assembled at Jerusalem, to deliberate upon this question, (a) and a long discussion ensued. No one, however, suggested that the debate was superfluous, because infant circumcision was superseded by its anti-type infant baptism. And yet the mere annunciation of this circumstance, would have for ever settled the controversy. We contend, that the apostles could not have avoided making some reference to such a satisfactory solution of the existing difficulty, as this must have proved if such a solution existed. A mere reference to the substitution of infant baptism for infant circumcision; a declaration that though the modus of the Jewish rite was changed, its essential features were retained; would have quelled all clamour. But the perfect silence of the apostles concerning any such mode of settling the dispute, proved that such mode did not exist; and that infant baptism as a substitute for infant circumcision was unknown to them.

We entreat our Pædo-baptist brethren, to consider this argument. We have never yet met with the man

(a) See Acts xv.

who could reply to it; nor do we believe it possible fairly to escape from its force.

IX. *Infants are saved not by virtue of any covenant made with man, but by the covenant of Redemption.* To this point we have already referred; (a) we shall therefore not enlarge upon it here. Even the children of Abraham, and of believers, are not saved by what is commonly called the new covenant; but by their interest in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. They are incapable of faith, and consequently cannot have an interest in that covenant, the terms of which are, "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."

Hence appears the absurdity of baptizing infants. The ordinances of the new covenant cannot with propriety be administered to any but those who are interested in the new covenant; but infants are not interested in the new covenant, and therefore, are not entitled to its ordinances. They are interested in the secret covenant of redemption; but not in the new covenant of grace.

X. *We shall now be better prepared to consider the true nature and tenor of the Abrahamic covenant.* We apprehend that the right explanation of the Abrahamic covenant has been hit upon by those who consider it, as having a literal and spiritual signification.

"For the accomplishment of the grand promise, that all nations should be blessed in Abraham, three promises were given to him. FIRST, a numerous posterity, which was fulfilled in the letter, in the nation of Israel. It was fulfilled in the spirit, by the divine constitution, that makes all believers the children of Abraham. The unbelieving Jews were Abraham's children as to the flesh, yet there is a sense in which Jesus denies that

(a) Pages 68, 69.

they were the children of Abraham. The SECOND promise was to be a God to him and his seed, which was fulfilled in the letter, by his protection of Israel in Egypt,—his delivering of them from bondage,—his taking them into covenant at Sinai,—and all his subsequent dealings with them in their generations, till they were cast off by their rejection of Christ. This promise is fulfilled in the spirit, by God's being a God to all believers, and to them alone, (a) in a higher sense than he was to Israel. (b) The THIRD promise was of the land of Canaan, fulfilled in the letter to Israel, and in the spirit fulfilled to the true Israel, in the possession of the heavenly inheritance. In accordance with this double sense of the promises of this covenant, the kingdom of God in Israel, with its officers, laws, worship, &c., is a visible model of the invisible kingdom of Christ. (c)

Hence it appears, that the promises of the Abrahamic covenant, had a twofold application. They guaranteed to Abraham's natural seed, the enjoyment of many temporal blessings; and they secured to his spiritual seed, that their faith should be counted to them for righteousness. But the Abrahamic covenant contains no promise to the natural seed of Abraham's spiritual seed. It is true God promised to be a God to Abraham's seed after him; and this promise has ever been fulfilled. God was a God to the Jews, Abraham's natural seed, until they were cast off, for crucifying the Lord Jesus; and he has ever been a God in a higher and more important sense to Abraham's spiritual seed, to all who have obtained like precious faith, with their illustrious head. But no promise was made in that covenant to

(a) iv. Rom. 11, 12. (b) xxxi. Jere. 33. (c) Dr. Carson on Baptism, p. 214.

the natural seed of believers. "That covenant constitutes all believers Abraham's seed, and secures to them an inheritance as such; but of their seed it says nothing." (a) No argument therefore, can be drawn from the promises made in that covenant to believers, to favour the baptism of the *children* of believers.

The reader is requested to turn to the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah, from the thirty-first to the thirty-fourth verse, and to the eighth chapter of Hebrews, from the tenth to the thirteenth verse, for a full description of the new covenant, or the covenant of grace. All interested in this covenant are said to "have the laws of God written upon their heart, by God himself;" to "know the Lord from the *least* of them unto the greatest;" and "to have their sins forgiven, and their iniquities remembered no more." Now, clearly, the infants of believers are not included in this covenant. Can they be said to know the Lord, and to have the law of God written upon their hearts? Do they not need instruction when they grow up, as much as other children? How absurd to apply passages like these to infants! They can only be fulfilled in Abraham's spiritual seed.

XI. Dr. Wardlaw endeavours to prove the identity of the Abrahamic covenant with the covenant of grace, from these words of the Apostle:—

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (b) Now, it is quite clear, that the Abrahamic covenant preached and adumbrated the gospel; but does it hence follow, that it was the gospel? If so, then, the greater part of the ceremonies and sacrifices of

(a) Dr. Carson on Baptism, p. 220. (b) iii. Gal. 8.

the law, were the gospel; for they preached salvation by faith in the atonement. To call the Abrahamic covenant the gospel, is absurd. Did the Abrahamic covenant contain nothing but *gospel* truth? Do all its promises apply to every believer? Has God any where promised to be the God of the seed of believers, as he promised to be the God of the seed of Abraham? Many things which are essential elements of the Abrahamic covenant, are not promised in the gospel to all believers.

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they who are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they who are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” (a) This passage tells against, and not for Pædo-baptism. It establishes the important point to which we have more than once alluded, that *believers alone are the spiritual seed of Abraham*; and that the spiritual application of the promises of the Abrahamic covenant, can only be made to *believers*.

The Abrahamic covenant was of a peculiar character. It is not made with all believers, though as a consequence of its existence, believers are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

“If a man is a believer, God will be his God, according to the covenant of Abraham, for he is by faith one of the seed of Abraham; but that he shall have a spiritual or a carnal seed is not promised by that covenant. The covenant secured this to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob only; for to these it was individually given. It is as

absurd for a believer to claim the promises to Abraham, as to claim the crown of Great Britain. This is a point as clear as the light of heaven, and it overturns all the elaborate deductions that have been drawn from the Abrahamic covenant." (a)

XII. We shall in conclusion explain how circumcision was to Abraham "a seal of righteousness." Dr. Dwight endeavours, but very unsuccessfully, to shew, that this passage proves, that the Abrahamic covenant, was the covenant of grace, which God has always made with those who *believe*, in all periods of the world's history. If, however, we read the whole verse we shall readily discover the meaning of the apostle. "We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." iv. Rom. 9, 10, 11. We may here notice, first; this whole passage is applied not to the *Jews generally, but to Abraham particularly*. It is not said, that circumcision was the seal of righteousness to *all* the Jews, but to Abraham individually. Secondly; it is spoken of as being received by a person of mature years, and of great piety, since it was "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised." Thirdly; it is not alluded to, as though sealing any *future* blessings which Abraham was looking for, but as sealing a blessing which he had possessed long before, even "the righteousness which he had through faith."

(a) Dr. Carson on Baptism p. 221.

The apostle carefully abstains from saying that circumcision sealed the possession of any future *spiritual* blessing, either to Abraham or *his offspring*:—he simply states, that circumcision sealed that which a strong and lively faith had *previously* realised, long before his circumcision. Fourthly; the apostle expressly adds, that he received this seal or testimony to the acceptance of his faith, “that he might be the father of *all them that believe*, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also.” A participation in Abraham’s blessedness is restricted to those who *believe*, whether circumcised or not. To apply what is here said to infants, is therefore downright folly. The words can only be applied to Abraham, as it cannot be said of any other person, that, he is constituted “*the FATHER of all them who believe*, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.” To say that circumcision or baptism, can be to *an infant* a seal of the righteousness which he had by faith, yet being unbaptized or uncircumcised, is worse than folly; *and yet this is the only passage in the whole bible, in which circumcision is called a seal.* All the arguments, therefore, drawn from this passage, and from others relating to circumcision, in favour of infant sprinkling, are destitute of any force. A little calm reflection will convince any impartial mind, that circumcision never was the seal of the covenant of grace. Circumcision was a peculiar seal to Abraham, of the acceptance of his faith, and of his being constituted the temporal Head of all his posterity, and the spiritual Head of all true believers. But in every other case, circumcision sealed no spiritual blessing to the *individual* who was circumcised: it sim-

ply sealed, that, God would be a God to all Abraham's posterity, after the flesh ; and a God in a much better sense, to his spiritual seed, believers. It had no personal application *as a seal of the righteousness of faith*, to the individual who was circumcised. The ordinance was inapplicable to females, who nevertheless were admitted to all the privileges of the Abrahamic covenant. It was on the other hand, administered to slaves, who had no interest in the privileges enjoyed by the Jewish people.

No argument therefore, can be drawn from circumcision in favour of infant baptism. This strong-hold of Pædo-baptism is demolished ; and our opponents must seek for some other defence of their practice.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONDUCT OF CHRIST TO THE LITTLE CHILDREN BROUGHT UNTO HIM.

The conduct of our Lord to the little children brought unto him is often urged as an argument in favour of infant baptism. “And they brought young children unto him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.” From this circumstance, some endeavour to prove the correctness of infant baptism, but we can shew the reader, in a few minutes, that this passage is *directly opposed* to such a practice. For, first;—we are told in another part of the Testament, that Jesus did not baptize. “Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.” (a) If Jesus therefore baptized not, it is

(a) John iv. 2.

evident he could not have baptized these children. Secondly, consider, that the disciples, who baptized for Christ, were *the very persons who rebuked* the people that brought these children to Christ. But, it is very evident, that had the disciples been in the habit of baptizing children, or had they received any command from Christ for such an act, they never would have dared to rebuke these people for bringing infants to Christ. Thirdly, had it been the mind and will of Christ that children should be baptized, he certainly would have stated it at this time. For, consider all the circumstances of the case. Here were a number of persons, exceedingly anxious for the good of their offspring; in the height of their parental solicitude they bring them to Jesus, that he may touch them, and pray over them. Picture the group! see the anxious parents, crowding round our Saviour, holding forth their offspring to his notice, and commending them to his care! mark the dignified benevolence with which our Lord gazes on the scene! And *now surely* if baptism will be of any service to these infants, if it will confer any benefit upon them, if it will secure them any privilege, our Lord will command their baptism! But he says not a word upon the subject, but simply takes them in his arms and blesses them. *If Christ ever intended infant baptism to exist, he certainly would have taken this favourable opportunity for stating it; but not a word is said upon the subject; from which we fairly infer, that it never was the will of Christ that infants should be baptized.* Thus bishop Taylor says, “From the action of Christ’s blessing infants, to infer they are to be baptized, proves nothing so much, as that *there is a want of better arguments*; for the conclusion would with more probability, be derived thus: Christ blessed infants,

and so dismissed them, but baptized them not; therefore infants are not to be baptized." (a)

Other eminent Pædo-baptists have made similar admissions. Mr. Poole's Continuator, on this very scripture remark:—"We must take heed we do not found infant baptism upon the example of Christ in this text; *for it is certain that he did not baptize THESE children.* Mark only saith, He took them into his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them." (b)

Dr. Doddridge says, "I acknowledge these words of themselves will not prove infant baptism to be an institution of Christ." (c)

When our Redeemer says, "*of such* is the kingdom of God," he evidently means that the kingdom of God consists of persons possessed of the meekness and teachableness of little children. He does not mean the kingdom of God is of little children. Had he intended to convey that idea, he would have said, "*of them*," and not "*of such*." The phrase "*of such*" implies LIKENESS *not* IDENTITY. The whole transaction is illustrated by another of a similar character; Jesus called a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said "Verily I say unto you except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (d)

(a) Liberty of Prophecy, p. 230 (b) In loco. (c) In loco.
(d) xviii. Matt. 2, 3.

CHAPTER III.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS.

Another argument in favour of infant baptism, is by some drawn from the holiness of the children of believers, which is referred to by Paul, in those words, "Else were your children unclean; but now they are holy." This passage is strongly insisted upon by Drs. Doddridge and Dwight, as a proof of the title which the children of believers have to baptism. But if the reader will turn to the connexion, he will readily perceive the meaning of the holy apostle:—"And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by (or to) the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by (or to) the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy." On this passage we observe, First;—the minds of some of the Corinthians whose partners were unconverted, were much disturbed with these two questions: Is it lawful for us who are christians to live with our unconverted partners? and are the children who have been born to us since our conversion, legitimate, or the offspring of an unlawful connexion? Such marriages

were not *lawful* to the Jews, and they were commanded on more than one occasion, to put away their strange wives and children. (a) The apostle meets these questions, by shewing that there is nothing unlawful in the continuance of the connexion, in such cases, and that therefore the children are *not* the fruit of uncleanness. He does not say that the unbelieving husband, or the unconscious children, are made the partakers of a work of spiritual sanctification in the heart; but that they are made ceremonially holy; the husband sanctified to the wife, or the wife to the husband, so that no legal defilement attaches either to them or their offspring. But all this has nothing to do with baptism. Had the apostle added, "and the faith of *one* parent shall be sufficient to give the child a title to baptism," then might this passage have been deemed conclusive; and most certainly if it were the custom to baptize the children of believing parents, the important question would have been here discussed and answered, "*is the faith of one parent a sufficient warrant for the baptism of an infant.*" But this question is not even alluded to; from which we are to infer, that children were not baptized at all in the days of Paul. Secondly, consider too, that if we are to gather from this passage, that *children* are to be baptized, on the ground of the faith of the parent, then we must conclude that *the unbelieving partner* is to be baptized on the same ground. For the apostle affirms the same thing of the unbelieving husband as he does of the children. He as much states that the *unbelieving husband* is made holy by the believing wife, as, that the children are; and therefore, if *the holiness here referred to, gives the child a title to baptism, it must confer the same right on the unbelieving husband.*

(a) See x. Ezra 3—44. and xiii. Nehe. 23, 24.

The passage might better be translated thus, "The unbelieving husband is made holy to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy to the husband: otherwise your children are unclean, but indeed they are holy." The term applied to the children is *agios* holy, and that applied to the unbelieving husband, is the verb derived from the same root, *agiazō*, to make holy. The same holiness is possessed by *both parties*; so that if the holiness of the children entitle *them* to baptism, that of the unbelieving spouse entitles *him* to the same privilege. But we boldly affirm, that, the proper inference to be drawn from this passage is, that such a ceremony as infant baptism was unknown to the apostles. *It is quite clear that scruples respecting the legitimacy and ceremonial purity of these children, if they had received christian baptism, could never have entered the minds of their parents.*

Could the parent doubt, that, his child was ceremonially holy, if it had been baptized? How can we account for such scruples on the supposition, that, the children had received the solemn ordinance of baptism in the name of the sacred Trinity.

CHAPTER IV.

PETER'S SERMON ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

An argument in favour of the baptism of infants, is frequently adduced from this passage in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, "The promise is to you and to your children." Dr. Dwight and others have seized upon these words, but have, very unfortunately, from some accident or other, omitted all notice of the connexion. "Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts ii. 38, 39. Now here, reader, notice; First, what the promise itself is. This we must gather from the connexion; and we find that it is such as cannot be applied to infants, for it is the gift of the Holy Ghost. "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children, &c. The gift of the Holy Ghost is the promise. But how can this be applied to children in a state of infancy? how can they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? Secondly, notice the connect-

ing clause, "even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." *Not to all your children whom you may choose to sprinkle in their infancy, but to as many as the Lord your God shall call.*" To them and to them only. To those who are of an age capable of receiving the promised blessing, and of being called by God, and who have been actually called. By this connecting clause the question is at once settled, and it is plain that infants are not referred to. Thirdly, consider that the Greek word *tekna*, here rendered children, simply means offspring without any reference to age. It indicates merely the relation between father and son. It answers to our word, children, when we employ it in such sentences as the following 'we are all the children of Adam.' It is applied to both sexes, and to all ages. It is used in cases where it cannot refer to any but adults. As in the following, 'in this are manifest the children of God, (*ta tekna tou theou*) and the children of the devil, (*ta tekna tou diabolou*)' 1 John iii. 10. "If ye were Abraham's children, (*tekna*) ye would do the works of Abraham." John viii. 39. In this same sense it is used in the passage which we are now discussing. The nature of the promise alluded to, the defining clause connected with the words, and the general use and sense of the term, must convince any impartial mind that unconscious babes cannot be alluded to, but persons who were of such an age as to render them *capable* of receiving the promise.

CHAPTER V.

THE BAPTISM OF HOUSEHOLDS.

Dr. Wardlaw, and Mr. Ewing, both dwell at great length upon the baptism of the households, mentioned in scripture, as a clear proof that *infants* were baptized by the apostles.

But before this argument can serve the Pædo-baptist cause, it must be in evidence, that there were *children* in these households; and that *they were baptized*.—*Mere probability will not suffice to establish a controverted affirmative.* It does not devolve upon us to prove, that there were not infants in these households, and that if there were, they were not included among the baptized. It lies upon our opponents to prove their affirmative, that there *were* infants, in these households; and that they were included among the baptized. This however they cannot do; so that the argument from the households is not worth a straw to them.

The baptism of households does not necessarily imply the baptism of infants, for there are many households in which there are no infants. And even if there were infants in the households mentioned in scripture as baptized, it does not necessarily follow, that they were

included among the baptized. The commission was to baptize "*disciples*," or "*believers*," and as infants cannot possibly be regarded as "*disciples*" or "*believers*," they could not be baptized by virtue of the commission. *The known limitations of the commission would exclude them.* A baptized household, therefore, in scripture means, a household all the adults of which had been first discipled and then baptized, according to the commission.

The terms house, household, and family, &c., are frequently used in a limited sense. If on calling at the house of a friend, we were told, that "the family were gone to chapel," should we understand, that infants were included? The infant might be at the time at home, yet we do not think that our Pædo-baptist friends would reprove any one for saying under such circumstances "the whole family are gone to chapel!"

It is in the same sense that the apostle uses the word in the following passage:—"A bishop then must be;" "one that ruleth well *his own house*, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own *house*, how shall he take care of the Church of God." Clearly infants are not included in this place under the term house, for they are incapable of such government as is here described. The house to be ruled must be a house capable of being ruled. So a baptized house must be a house capable of being baptized.

Another instance of a similar use of the term is found in the first book of Samuel. "The man Elkanah, and *all his house* went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow." Yet we are afterwards told, that Hannah and *the infant* SAMUEL abode at home. A similar passage is found in the book of Joshua, "As for me and my *house* we will *serve* the Lord." But infants, clearly, are incapable of serving the Lord.

So when we read, that, a "*household*" was baptized by the apostles, we are evidently to understand the word household in the limited sense which the commission puts upon it. The commission, and the unvarying practice of the apostles on other occasions, must explain the latitude of the meaning of the term, in such a connexion. As the commission enjoins the baptism of none but "disciples," or "believers;"—and as the apostles on all other occasions scrupulously adhered to this direction, we are bound to believe that infants were not included among the individuals of the household who were baptized.

We shall now briefly notice the accounts of the baptism of the households by the apostles.

There are only three cases of household baptism recorded in the New Testament; although, no doubt, *many* of the heads of *other* houses were baptized. But, though thousands who were at the head of families were baptized, yet we only have it on record that *three families* were baptized. These are particularly alluded to. Now, from this fact, we infer, that there was something in the character of these households which distinguished them from others, and which will explain the reason of their baptism. This peculiarity we shall find to be nothing more nor less than this, *that they all believed*. To begin with the house of the jailer:—"And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to *all that were in his house*. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with *all his house*." (a) Let the reader observe, First; all the *baptized* members of this household *had the word of the Lord spoken unto them*; clearly, then, there could have been none among them

(a) xvi. Acts, 32, 33, 34.

but persons who were capable of having the word preached unto them. Secondly; all the baptized "*rejoiced believing in God*;" they must therefore have *all* been able to believe and rejoice in God. But how can unconscious infants be capable of any of these things? and as they were incompetent to hear the word, to believe, and rejoice in God, they were evidently not included in the baptism here described; since *all* who were baptized, without exception, heard the word, believed, and rejoiced. Thirdly; But should it be urged, that, we are not to suppose that literally every individual in the household believed, &c., but that the greater part did; we answer, that if this limitation is to be admitted as to the *belief*, &c., of the household, then must it also be admitted in the *baptism* of the household, since it is equally said, that "*all* believed, rejoiced, &c.," as, that "*all* were baptized." The two terms are the same, and therefore if the one is to be understood in a restricted sense, so must the other; but, if one is understood literally to mean *all*, then must the other mean the same thing. Which ever way we understand the words, they clearly recognize the connexion between faith and baptism. We know not whether there were infants in this household or not, and upon that point our opponents are as ignorant as ourselves; but we do contend, that if there were, *they were not baptized*; for all the baptized members of the household had the word of the Lord preached unto them, and rejoiced, believing in God. But infants are incapable of all these things, and therefore, were evidently not among the baptized.

If Dr. Wardlaw understands the phrase "*all his house*," as referring only to the adults when it is said, that "*all his house*," "*rejoiced, believing in God*;"—he gives up his argument; and must understand the phrase

in the same limitation when it is applied to the baptism of the house.

“By the very same argument that our opponents shew that there might have been unbelieving infants in *believing houses*, we can shew, that there might have been unbaptized infants in baptized houses.” (a)

Another baptized household was that of Stephanas. “And I baptized also the household of Stephanas.” (b) The baptism of this household is not recorded in the Acts. We have no information that it contained any children; or that they were included among the baptized; but there is, on the other hand, clear proof that the baptized individuals of the household were believers. “Ye know,” says the apostle, “the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.” It appears then, that this baptized household were “the first fruits of Achaia,” that is, “they were the first who trusted in Christ,” and that they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. But how could *infants* addict themselves to the ministry of the saints? and if that were impossible, have we not plain evidence that there were no infants in this baptized household? The terms are both equally extensive in their application; the one is as general as the other. If, therefore, we believe that every person in the household was baptized, we must believe that every person in the household addicted himself to the ministry of the saints; but if we understand the expression as limited, in the one case, we are bound to understand it in the other, in the same way. If all the house did not addict themselves to the ministry of the saints, then all the house were not baptized; if some in the house were incapable of the for-

(a) Carson, p. 185. (b) 1 Corin. i. 16.

mer, they were equally incapable of the latter. If we interpret the one passage, as merely meaning that a *great number* in the household, were addicted to the ministry of the saints, then we must apply the same interpretation to the other, and say, that it simply means that a considerable number in the household, repented, believed the gospel, and were baptized. But, if our opponents insist upon it, that *every inmate* of the house of Stephanas was baptized, we have the same right to maintain that *every inmate addicted himself to the ministry of the saints*, or, in other words, was a pious character. This however we will not do. There may have been children in this house for aught that we know to the contrary. All we contend for is, that, every baptized individual, trusted in Christ, and addicted himself to the ministry of the saints. Infants are as much excluded from the baptism, as from the faith in Christ, and the ministry of the saints. They are not more incapable of the latter than of the former!

The last household baptism mentioned in the word of God, is that of Lydia. This is recorded in the Acts. (a) “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto those things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.” But, can our opponents prove, that there were infants in this household, and that they were baptized? One moment’s reflection will convince the reader, that all the probabilities of this case, are decidedly in our favour. For, first;—how can it be

(a) xvi. Acts, 14, 15.

proved that Lydia ever was married? The probabilities are, that she was *not* a married woman. If she had a husband, it is not very likely, that she would have said, "come into MY house," more especially when you remember, that the condition of women in those countries was any thing but such as would have warranted Lydia to use such an expression. Or secondly;—Supposing Lydia to have been married, and to have been at the time of her conversion a widow, how can it be proved that she had children? or thirdly;—admitting for the sake of argument, that she had been a mother, how can it be ascertained that her children were infants? And if she had infant children, how can it be demonstrated, that *they* were baptized? *Will the commission baptize them? Will apostolical precedent in other cases baptize them?* A household is said to be ruled, yet infants are not ruled;—a household is said to serve the Lord, yet infants cannot serve the Lord. The term household, therefore, will not necessarily baptize Lydia's children. What relief then does this case of household baptism yield the Pædo-baptist cause?

Will mere probability sustain and establish a controverted affirmative? Will the Pædo-baptists venture to ground the baptism of infants upon the mere probability, that Lydia had children; and that they were baptized? No amount of proof which we offer will convince them that baptism is immersion; on that point the most overwhelming and convincing evidence is not deemed enough; but when they are vindicating their own practice, the merest probability is sufficient for their purpose!

All the probabilities, however, are AGAINST them in the present instance.

Lydia was of the city of Thyatira, and had most probably come to Philippi for the purpose of trade, she

being "a seller of purple." The distance from the one place to the other was about three hundred miles ; now, is it at all probable, supposing her to have had a young family, that she would have brought them this long and tedious journey with her ? Or, supposing her to have been settled in Philippi, was she ever married ? had she ever had any children ? and were they yet in their infancy ? Her household, no doubt, were her servants, who assisted her in her occupation, and who, like herself, believed. In the fortieth verse of the sixteenth chapter of the Acts, we are told, "Paul and Silas entered into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen *the brethren*, they comforted them, and departed." It seems, then, that there were many other believers in the house of Lydia, besides herself, who are styled brethren, and who received comfort from Paul and Silas ; and though it is not said in so many words, that *none* but these brethren were baptized, yet, as the other two baptized households, consisted entirely of believers, and as faith was *always* required before baptism, there can be no doubt that this baptized household, was like the others, a believing household exclusively. It shews very clearly the weakness of the cause of our brethren, that they should be so hard driven for arguments, as to be obliged to resort to the probabilities of a case, where *all the probabilities are against them !*

We are informed in another place, that "Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue in Corinth, believed on the Lord with all his house ;" (a) but we are not informed of their baptism. How then do we know, that he and his household were baptized ? clearly, from nothing but the commission, and the universal practice as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. So though we

(a) xviii Acts 8.

are not told, that Lydia's household believed before baptism, yet from the same sources, we are *certain* such was the case.

There are two other houses of which it is said, that they were all pious people. "Cornelius, the centurion, was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house." (a) It is said of a certain nobleman, of Capernaum, that "himself believed, and his whole house." (b) But does it therefore follow, that, in these households there were none but adults? That may have been the case, or it may not. The meaning of the historians evidently is, that, all who were capable of believing, did believe; and so, when we read, that a household was baptized, we are to understand, that, every individual in the house capable of being baptized, was baptized.

(a) x. Acts, i, 2. (b) iv. John, 53

PART IV.

OBJECTIONS TO IMMERSION, AS THE ONLY MODE OF BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

Our Pædo-baptist brethren are in the habit of asserting, that, the three thousand converts could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost, and therefore, must have been sprinkled.

It is a sufficient reply to this objection ; that if the three-thousand were baptized, they must have been immersed ; for baptism is immersion and nothing else. *We are to gather the nature of the act, not from uncertain probabilities, but from the unvarying meaning of the word, by which the act is expressed.* Now, we have proved, that the term *baptizo*, has but one meaning ; this meaning therefore it must have in the case before us. No supposed difficulties can alter its signification. If the

three thousand were not immersed on the day of Pentecost, the historian has given us a false statement of the transaction, for he tells us, that, they were immersed. *The attempt to prove, that they could not have been immersed, is virtually an attempt to convict the blessed Spirit of being the author of falsehood.*

We are however prepared to shew, that, there is nothing improbable in the supposition, that the three thousand were immersed.

Dr. Morrison in his Catechetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, (a) in reply to the question, "Is it all probable, that the multitude of new converts were baptized by immersion?" answers, "*All* that can be said is, that considering the scarcity of water in Jerusalem, and the limited number of administrators, it is highly improbable." The review of this work in the March number of the Baptist Magazine, for 1839, contains so judicious an answer to these statements, that we cannot do better than give it verbatim. "The scarcity of water in Jerusalem! What! the chosen city of that land which Moses eulogised as "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills," was it so miserably supplied with water, as to be destitute of a few natural or artificial baths? In a climate, in which frequent bathing is a luxury, almost a necessary of life; among a people, whose ritual prescribed on occasions which must have been continually happening, that they should bathe themselves in water, and remain unclean till evening; in a metropolis, which had been beautified and rendered commodious for its inhabitants by successive powerful and wealthy kings; in the city, in which Solomon had "made pools of water," and Uzziah had "dugged many wells," or, as

(a) Page 92.

the margin has it, "cut out many cisterns," could there have been such an appalling scarcity of water? We should have thought that the whole number of believers might have been immersed with ease in that pool which had five porches, or in

"———Siloa's brook, that flow'd
Fast by the oracles of God."

This, however, is only half of that which "can be said," conjoined with it, is the "limited number of administrators." But, including Matthias, there were twelve apostles, to say nothing of others, who might with propriety engage in this work. This would give an average number of two hundred and fifty converts for each apostle. What would our brethren in the West Indies say, if told that two hundred and fifty were too many for one person to baptize in an evening? They have experience in the baptism of hundreds, and they will tell us, that the time required for the deliberate immersion of two hundred and fifty, with the recital of the customary words over each, is about one hour and twenty minutes. Less than forty minutes, it was remarked, on one occasion, were occupied by Mr. Philippo, in baptizing one hundred and twenty-nine persons in Spanish Town. "All that can be said" then, respecting the improbability of the immersion of the three thousand, amounts to just nothing. After listening to it, we are still left to judge of the nature of the action, from the meaning of the word used to describe it." To this judicious reply, we may add, that when Peter began his sermon, it was, as he himself states, only the third hour of the day, that is, nine in the morning. Now, allowing an hour for the delivery of Peter's sermon, (although, from what is written, it could scarcely have taken that length of time,) another hour, or two, or even three, for receiving the confession of the can-

didates, which in those days, was simply an avowal of their belief in the name of Christ; the time of the day would have been one o'clock when the baptizing commenced. Thus, each apostle would have the afternoon and evening in which to baptize two hundred and fifty people. I only wish that I had two hundred and fifty genuine converts to baptize this very afternoon; I would then, without difficulty demonstrate, that, the three thousand might have been baptized by the apostles in two hours with the utmost leisure, and decorum. I engage to baptize two hundred and fifty persons, "decently, and in order," in an hour and a half with ease; though my frame is not remarkable for its muscular strength. Besides, we have scriptural evidence, that the *disciples* baptized on other occasions, as well as the apostles; why then should we be obliged to suppose that none but the apostles baptized on this occasion? Philip, who was not an apostle, nor even an elder or pastor, *but a deacon*, went down to Samaria, preached Christ unto them, and baptized nearly the whole city; (Acts, 8 c.) and other disciples who were scattered abroad by persecution, went every where preaching the gospel, and without doubt, when their ministry, like that of Philip, was blessed of God, they baptized those who believed. All the difficulties, therefore, in the way of the immersion of the three thousand are visionary. We are still left to gather the nature of the act, from the acceptation of the term by which it is described.

CHAPTER II.

THE BAPTISM OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE RED SEA.

Our opponents imagine, that they find something to their purpose in the baptism of the Israelites in the cloud and in the Red Sea. They contrive very dexterously to make the cloud and the spray of the sea, sprinkle the Israelites, and then call this their baptism!

Now we are not informed, that they were sprinkled with the spray of the sea. It is a mere assumption to say they were. Such a circumstance would have been an annoyance to them. Moreover, "*the wind which blew the water from them, could not blow the spray on them.*" (a) And even if they were sprinkled with the spray, that could not be called their *baptism*. For baptism is immersion, not sprinkling.

The words of the apostles are as follows:—"Moreover brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers, were *under* the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." (b) The apostle draws a parallel, between the baptism of the Israelites

(a) Carson, p. 413. (b) 1 Corin. x. 1, 2.

and that of christians: there must therefore be some analogy between them. The Israelites by venturing into the Red Sea at the command of Moses, declared their faith in him as their temporal deliverer, and inspired teacher. Hence they are said to have been baptized, "into (eis) Moses." So the christian in his baptism declares his allegiance to the Redeemer, into whose name he is baptized. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."

The emerging of the Israelites from their temporary burial, in the cloud and the sea, symbolized the doctrine of the resurrection; so does the emersion of the believer from the liquid grave of baptism.

The Israelites were really immersed;—the bed of the sea was beneath them, its massive liquid walls were on either side of them, and the cloud covered them. Dr. Wardlaw, ridicules the idea of a "dry baptism," and asks, would our (baptist) brethren, consider a man duly baptized, by his being placed between two cisterns of water, with a third over his head? By no means we reply. But does Dr. Wardlaw forget, that, there are many kinds of immersion. Every immersion is not a wet immersion. Its dryness or wetness depends upon the nature of the substance into which the immersion takes place. The word baptizo simply denotes immersion, without describing the element into which the act is performed. We know that christian baptism is an immersion *in water*, because the element is specified in the Holy Scriptures. But the word baptizo *in itself* does not express the element used in performing the action of the verb. It is applied to immersion whether dry or wet.

The temporary burial of the Israelites in the sea and in the cloud, and their subsequent re-ascension,

beautifully resemble the immersion of the believer in the liquid grave of baptism, and his resurrection therefrom. This passage therefore may be turned upon our opponents. The battery with which they hoped to demolish the exclusive claims of immersion, is in our possession, and we now turn its fire upon them. We appeal to the candid reader; may not the condition of the Israelites when "IN the sea and UNDER the cloud," be very appropriately styled an immersion? Which does their baptism most resemble, an immersion, a pouring, or a sprinkling?

Dr. Witsius, though a Pædobaptist, takes the same view of this passage as we have here given.

In his chapter on the "extraordinary sacraments in the Wilderness," he says:—"The other difficulty is something more considerable; namely how the Israelites could be baptized in the cloud and in the sea, since they were not dipped in the water of the sea, nor wetted by the cloud. But we are to know, First; that the apostle uses the term baptism, here, in a figurative sense. For, because the Corinthians gloried of baptism, the apostle applies the name of baptism to those things, of which the Israelites might glory, as much as the Corinthians could of baptism, and which were to them instead of baptism. Secondly; there is also some sort of agreement in the external sign; a cloud differs very little from water, and the sea is water already; the cloud hung over their heads, so also water hangs over baptized persons. Compare this with what we shall advance presently from Gregory of Nyssa, concerning the cloud. *The sea surrounded them on all sides*; so does water also those that are baptized. Thirdly; this sign signifies the same that baptism does; and so baptism is the anti-type of it, as on a like sub-

ject Peter said." (*a*) The learned Pædo-baptist, Dr. Witsius, being judge ; the baptism of the Israelites in the cloud and in the sea, was a real immersion !

(*a*) On Covenants, Vol. iii. p. 1022.

CHAPTER III.

THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT.

Perhaps the most specious argument of our Pædo-baptist brethren, is, that which they derive from the baptism of the Spirit. They assert, that, the baptism of the Spirit is called "a pouring out," and "a shedding forth of the Spirit," (*a*) and that consequently the baptism of water must be a pouring of water upon the person; and not an immersion of the whole body in water. Now we deny, that, the pouring out of the Spirit is the same thing with baptism in the Spirit. *The former is preliminary to the latter, just as the pouring of water into a bath, is preparatory to the plunging of the body therein.* The Spirit was poured out, that, the apostles might be immersed therein. The pouring out of the Spirit, and baptism in his influences, are two distinct things: the one being antecedent to the other.

The communication of the Spirit, and the application of the blood of Christ to the conscience, are both repre-

(*a*) Acts ii. 17, 33. .

sented by the various figures of sprinkling upon, pouring upon, and immersion into.

But it is clear, that, all such phrases are figurative, and that each has its distinct meaning. When the communication of the Spirit is compared to the sprinkling of clean water upon the heart; the allusion evidently is to the purification of our natures by his grace. He is said to be poured upon us; because we usually think of him as dwelling on high, and because his influence upon the heart resembles in its effects the pouring of water upon the body. The apostles are said to have been immersed in the Spirit, *because they were as completely under his controul and influence, as the baptized person is under the power of the element into which he is immersed.* The likeness is in the *effects*, and not in the *mode* of the communication of the Spirit. When we say a person is immersed in sleep, or care, what do we mean by the figure? Do we intend to express the mode in which sleep or care comes upon the individual? Our meaning is, that, he is as completely under the influence of sleep or care, as the person immersed in water, is under the power of that element. So when we meet with the phrase "immersed in the Spirit," we are clearly to understand it as describing a state in which the whole person is under the powerful and irresistible controul of the Spirit. The Spirit cannot be literally poured out, any more than we can be literally immersed in his influences. Can *the divine being* be really poured out, or shed forth?

Our opponents err, in arguing from that which is figurative, to that which is plain and literal; they offend against common sense, in making the figurative use of a word settle its general meaning. Our proper course is, first, to ascertain the literal meaning of a term, and make this the key of our interpretation

of its figurative use. That the expressions under consideration are figurative, cannot for a moment be doubted, for *the Holy Spirit could no more be literally poured out or sprinkled upon the apostles, than they could literally be immersed in the Spirit*. Whichever way we interpret the words, it is evident that they *must not* be understood literally. The question is then simply this; What mode does the baptism of the Spirit best agree with; sprinkling, pouring, or immersion? As to sprinkling, that has no advocates, for none that we have yet read or heard of, have attempted to defend it from these passages. Our choice consequently lies between pouring or immersion. The account of the apostles baptism in the Spirit, is as follows: "Suddenly there came from heaven a sound, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it *filled* all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Let the reader observe, that, "the sound of the rushing wind *filled* all the house," and "the apostles were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost." There was therefore a literal baptism, or immersion, in the symbols of the Spirit's presence. The apostles were *surrounded* with the wind and fire. When a person enters a dark cavern, or room, he is said to be immersed or plunged in darkness. The darkness surrounds him on every side. In the same way the apostles were immersed in the wind and fire.

But there was also a figurative baptism in the Spirit himself, consisting in the entire subjection of the apostles to his celestial influences. The apostles were not masters of their own thoughts and words. "They spake as the Spirit gave them utterance." They may

be said with the utmost propriety to have been immersed in the Spirit. *A body baptized in any element is subject to its controul and imbued with its virtues ; and this is precisely the sense in which the apostles were baptized in the Spirit.*

CHAPTER IV.

REMAINING OBJECTIONS.

I. Some Pædo-baptists think, that, the words of the apostle Peter "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized," (*a*) suggest the application of the water to the person, and not of the person to the water. But a little reflection will convince the reader that the objection is invalid. The word water is here put for the whole ceremony. An individual might say in the same sense, "Can any man forbid bread and wine," meaning, can any one forbid admission to the Lord's supper. So when the apostle says, "Can any man forbid water," he means, can any man forbid the administration of the rite of immersion in water.

Suppose reader, you were to forbid a man your house, how do you think he would understand you? Could he conclude, that, you were forbidding him the application of your house to his person! would he not understand you as forbidding the entrance of his person

(*a*) Acts x. 47.

into your house? If a man forbids you his grounds, he interdicts your being found *in* them.

This is the sense in which the apostle uses the phrase in this place. The meaning of baptism is immersion, and immersion only. Forbidding water for baptism, is in effect, therefore, forbidding immersion in water!

II. Others again, think, they see sprinkling, as among "the divers washings," (baptisms) referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews. (a) This however is a gratuitous assumption. The word here does not mean any thing else but immersion. *It has but one meaning*, and that meaning it must have here. The apostle evidently refers to the various bathings of the body in water for the purpose of purification, which were enjoined by the law. That there were divers such immersions, the reader will easily perceive, by turning to the following passages:—Numb. xix. 7, 8. Levi. xxii. 6. Levi. xvi. 4, 24, 26, 28. Levi. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 21, 22, 27. Levi. xiv. 9. In each of these places the Jewish ritual enjoins, "bathing of the body in water;" and the manner in which this was done was by *immersion*.

Some have argued, that, because in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the same chapter, the apostle refers to a purification by sprinkling, therefore purification by sprinkling must be included among the divers baptisms referred to in the tenth verse. They might just as well say, that purification by sprinkling is among the "meats and drinks," mentioned in the tenth verse! What logic is this, because a rite by sprinkling is alluded to in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, therefore the divers baptisms of the tenth verse

(a) ix. Heb. 10, "divers washings," in the original it is *baptismois*, baptisms.

must be the same thing ! Let a person of but ordinary capacity read the chapter with an unprejudiced mind, and we are confident he will readily see, that, in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, the apostle is not treating of *the same rites* as are specified in the tenth verse.

In the tenth verse, he refers to the bathings of the flesh in water enjoined by the law on divers occasions ; and in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses, he is treating of the sprinkling of the blood, and the ashes of the red heifer. The sprinkling ceremonies are not called baptisms. They are rautisms not baptisms. The baptisms refer exclusively to the bathings practised under the law.

III. Others again argue against immersion, from Luke ii. 38. " And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he (Christ) had not first washed (baptized) before dinner." The original word translated " washed," is *ebaptisthe*. Some persons think it incredible, that the Pharisee should wonder at Christ for not immersing himself before dinner. For our part we see no difficulty in the matter. Every house in Jerusalem, of any size, was furnished with a bath. *An immersion of the body in water before dinner, would, in Judea, be a luxury rather than an annoyance ;* and before dinner is one of the most usual times for bathing.

The Pharisee knew that Christ was regarded by his followers as a very holy man, and it was natural that he should look for an extraordinary exhibition of sanctity in his conduct. Christ was constantly surrounded by multitudes, and liable to be touched by unclean persons. Now the Pharisees whenever they returned from mixing with the multitude in the market, invariably immersed themselves in water. And the superstitious Pharisee would very naturally wonder that a

man of such reputed sanctity as Jesus, should omit using the bath on a like occasion.

IV. Great stress is laid by our opponents on the fourth verse of the seventh of Mark. "And when they come from the market, except they wash (baptize) they eat not." "And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing (baptizing) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of beds, (*klinai*.) But there is no difficulty in this passage. The word *baptizo* still retains its *one* meaning. No supposed improbabilities are sufficient to change the signification of a term, unless they amount to an actual and proven *impossibility*. But what impossibility is there in the way of the Pharisees bathing the whole body in water after returning from a crowded market, in which they might have unwittingly contracted defilement? If a clean person touched an unclean person he became himself unclean. And in a market a Jew might thus easily defile himself. What more likely then, than, that the Pharisees should invariably immerse the body in water after returning from the market.

The historian is treating in the fourth verse of a different mode of purification from that specified in the second and third verses. The Pharisees never eat bread on the most ordinary occasions without first washing the hands and arms up to the elbow; but when they returned from market they immersed the whole body. The word used in the third verse to describe the washing of the hands, is *nipto*; that used in the fourth verse to describe the bathing of the whole body is *baptizo*.

But how could the Pharisees immerse their beds or couches? ask our opponents. And here they think they have us fast! We answer that as the word of God tells us they did immerse their beds, we unhesi-

tatingly believe its testimony. The word baptizo can have no other signification here, but that which it always has. *It will not do to attribute to it a meaning, which it never has elsewhere, in order to obviate the difficulties which are supposed to lie in the way of the immersion of couches.* We had rather confess a difficulty, than misinterpret the meaning of the words which the Spirit of God employs.

But there is no difficulty in the way of the immersion of these beds or couches. The word klinai is as frequently applied to beds as to couches, and the former were so light as to be able to be carried. Hence our Redeemer said to the sick man, "Take up thy bed and walk." Now a bed which could be taken up and carried about with ease, could be washed by immersion without difficulty.

And, *even the couches on which the Pharisees reclined at dinner, might have been so constructed, as to be taken to pieces, for the very purpose of immersion.* Besides, we are not told, whether, this was an occasional or frequent ceremony. It may have been observed only weekly, or monthly, or yearly. And surely the superstitious Pharisees would not think it a hardship to immerse their couches thus occasionally.

But we are quite satisfied with the simple facts, that *the Holy Spirit has told us, that these couches were immersed*; and that *the thing is not impossible.* Can the Pædo-baptists prove, that, these couches could not possibly have been immersed? They cannot; consequently the argument from this place does their cause no service. We simply shew, that, the thing is possible, and that is all, that, in fairness of argument, we can be called upon to shew!

V. Some Pædo-baptists affirm, that, the Philippian jailer could not have been immersed, because he was

baptized during the night, and in his own house. (a) As to the improbability of his immersion in the night, we treat it as ridiculous. The climate of Philippi was not so cold as to render such a service particularly disagreeable; and even if it had been so, the zeal of the primitive christians would have borne it.

The Jailer was not baptized in his own house. It is evident, that, he went out to be baptized: for AFTER his baptism, "*he (again) brought Paul and Silas into his house,*" (b) which manifestly implies, that, they had been out of the house for the purpose of baptizing the Jailer and his believing family. The river Strymon was at hand, and perhaps they were immersed in it. But it matters not to us, *where* they were immersed; whether in the house, or out of doors; whether in a bath or in a river. The Spirit of God tells us, "they were immersed," that is all we are concerned with. The thing is neither impossible nor improbable. The supposed difficulties exist only in the imaginations of the Pædo-baptists.

(a) See 33, and 34, vs. (b) xvi. Acts, 32. 33, 34.

PART V.

INFANT SPRINKLING CONSIDERED.

CHAPTER I.

REASONS FOR REJECTING INFANT SPRINKLING.

We reject sprinkling as a substitute for immersion,

I. *Because baptism is immersion and nothing else.* Sprinkling therefore cannot be baptism. Those who are sprinkled are not baptized.

II. *Because no case of baptism by sprinkling can be found in the scriptures.* Christ was immersed, the apostles, and all the primitive christians were immersed. To substitute sprinkling for baptism, would be to fly in the face of every example recorded in the word of God.

III. *Because Christ commanded "believers of all nations" to be immersed.* The commission gives one law respecting all believers. We must not change the mode of baptism, therefore, because the climate in which we live is colder than that of Judea. .

IV. *Because we have no right to alter the least of Christ's commandments.* (a) Christ is sole lawgiver in Zion; and He alone has power to *change* his own institutions.

V. *Because the substitution of sprinkling for immersion destroys the significancy of the rite.* The mode of baptism is symbolical. To change its mode, therefore, is to strip it of its symbolical meaning; and to render it ineffectual for the purposes of its institution. Sprinkling cannot represent a burial and resurrection with Christ, as immersion does.

VI. *Because the doctrine that we have the power to alter the institutions of Christ is downright Popery.* Such a dogma will give a sanction to all the foolery and superstition of the man of sin. It deprives the Bible of its majesty, and subjects the ordinances and word of God to be revised and amended by human wisdom.

VII. *Because nothing that Christ has enjoined, can be unimportant.* Shall we charge our Lord with commanding useless and trifling ceremonies? May we obey or neglect his commandments as we please?

We reject the baptism of INFANTS,

I. *Because we meet with no case of infant baptism in the New Testament.* Some of the most eminent Pædobaptists have frankly admitted this fact. Scripture precedent cannot be produced for this ceremony.

II. *Because we find no inspired PRECEPT enjoining upon parents the baptism of their children.* The duties of christian parents are clearly pointed out at great length in the apostolic epistles; but we nowhere find, that they are exhorted to baptize their children! Yet surely this duty, if it really existed, would have been urged upon them!

(a) Matt. v. 19.

III. *Because there is clear proof that infant baptism was unknown in the days of the apostles.* If it had been practised as a substitute for infant circumcision, the latter would have been abandoned as a matter of course, and there could have been no disputes as to its continuance or abrogation. The disputes about circumcision, which convulsed the church in the Apostle's days prove, that, there was then no corresponding ordinance for infants, in the christian church. (a)

IV. *Because infants are incapable of the terms of baptism.* The only baptism of the New Testament, requires repentance and faith as its terms. No other baptism is spoken of in the scriptures. But infants can neither repent nor believe, and therefore cannot be fit subjects for baptism.

V. *Because infant baptism sets aside true christian baptism.* It is not merely an error, but it is an error substituted for truth. It not only baptizes those whom the apostles never baptized, but it *supersedes* the baptism of believers, upon a profession of faith. It is not something additional to, but in the stead of, true christian baptism. It is a human substitute for a divine ordinance. As much as in it lies, it would forestall and render unnecessary the baptism of believers, by baptizing them in infancy.

VI. *Because God abominates all will-worship.* It may be said to those who baptize their children, "who hath required this at your hands?" Infant baptism being a human invention, is an act of will-worship. Now God cannot regard any act of worship with acceptance, which, not only he hath not commanded, but which supersedes something which he hath commanded.

VII. *Because infant baptism has no authority but tradition.* It cannot be found in the scriptures. Its only support is the traditions of the Fathers. But if we receive tradition as an authority, we must practice infant communion at the supper; we must use oil, honey, and milk, at baptism; we must consecrate the baptismal water; and exorcise the devil from the infant before baptizing him! all these ceremonies are sanctioned by tradition.

VIII. *Because infant baptism is a useless and unmeaning ceremony.* Those who practice it cannot point out any good purpose which it answers. But Christ has commanded no useless ceremonies. Infant baptism, therefore, cannot be "from heaven."

IX. *Because infants are not under the moral and spiritual administration of the Gospel.* They are incapable of intelligent service. They cannot worship God in spirit and in truth. They do not worship God at all. They are therefore unfit to receive any of the ordinances of a spiritual dispensation.

X. *Because infant baptism is fraught with perilous consequences to the souls of men.* It is calculated to mislead and deceive men in the matter of their salvation. Human nature is ever prone to rest upon mere forms of religion; and especially upon ritual and ceremonial observances. Infant baptism is a ceremony peculiarly adapted to impose itself upon the ignorant as a ground of eternal safety. It is regarded by the Church of England, as constituting all who receive it, "children of God," "members of Christ," and "inheritors of the kingdom of God." It is by others supposed to introduce the child into the covenant of grace. From its very nature it cannot fail to be regarded as possessed of some mysterious virtue, though what that virtue is parties are not agreed.

The baptism of believers is not liable to a similar abuse, because *it requires, that, the candidate shall be in a state of salvation antecedently to his baptism.* It cannot be said, therefore, that, *we* regard baptism as a saving ordinance.

But a ceremony of the nature of baptism practised upon an unconscious child who has neither repentance nor faith, cannot fail to make a most pernicious impression upon the minds of the people. It will be regarded by the masses as conferring some mysterious and saving benefit. In vain will evangelical preachers protest, that, infant baptism has no such virtue. The formalist will rest upon his baptism in infancy, spite of all their remonstrances. If infant baptism be christian baptism, it must baptize the infant either because he is already a christian, or with the intention of making him one.

II. *Because infant baptism is a pillar of Popery, and of every corrupt Protestant establishment.* Infant baptism is the right arm of the man of sin. Its introduction paved the way for the completion of the apostacy of the church in after ages. It laid a foundation for the erection of future national establishments of religion. The national baptism of infants, and their enrolment among the members of the church, made the erection of national establishments of christianity an easy matter. National infant baptism is a suitable platform on which to rear national establishments. Sweep away the foundation, and before long the hoary and ponderous superstructure will crumble into ruins!

CHAPTER II.

CONCLUDING ADDRESS TO THE READER.

And now, reader, our task is done. We have completed the design we contemplated, and have given you a bird's eye view of the whole question. May we ask what impression our statements have made upon your mind?

I. *Are you convinced of the propriety of believer's baptism by immersion?* Do you perceive it to be an ordinance of Jesus Christ? Then, if you are a humble believer, if you are a broken hearted penitent living at the foot of the cross, "arise and be baptized." Trifle not with your convictions. Remember the solemn declaration, "he who knew his Lord's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." The stripes of conscience when accusing us of neglected ordinances and violated duties, are heavy indeed. And if you would avoid such an infliction; and if you desire "the answer of a good conscience," delay not to observe this solemn ordinance of your Redeemer. "In keeping his commands there is great reward."

II. *Are you unconvinced?* Has this book made no impression upon your mind?—You have been immersed

in scripture, what then hinders your immersion in water? Wherein is the proof defective? Where have you discovered a flaw?

Tell us honestly whether you sat down to the perusal of our arguments with an unprejudiced mind? Did you not begin to read this book with a determination not to be convinced? If such has been the state of your mind we are not surprised that you profess *to be* unconvinced. What can convince a man who is determined to resist evidence, though it should reach to demonstration? We have no hope of reaching your conscience while this state of mind continues, But we solemnly warn you of the sin and peril which you incur by your obstinacy and bigotry. Does your conduct become a disciple of Jesus? Is this the way to treat an enquiry into the nature of one of your heavenly Master's ordinances? Shame, shame, upon such an anti-christian state of heart! I remember on one occasion handing to a Pædo-baptist brother, with whom I was on terms of the greatest intimacy, a book on the subject of baptism. He peremptorily refused to read it. I said, "if you will not *read* it, you shall *hear* it," and commenced reading a very important and conclusive passage aloud. The Pædo-baptist began to whistle and sing alternately, in order to drown my voice, and as soon as he could reach the door made his exit. He told me he would never read another book on baptism. And yet this individual is an honourable member of an Independent Church in London! I should as soon hope to shake the pillars of creation, as expect to move the prejudices of such a man!

III. But are you, believing reader, irresolute and fearful of taking so decided a step, as being baptized in the name of Jesus? What is the cause of your indecision?

Do you fear offending near relations? Remember Christ hath said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (a)

Do you dread the reproach and shame which you will incur by such a step? We would remind you, that, "whosoever doth not bear his cross, and go after Christ, CANNOT be his disciple," (b) and that, "whosoever shall be ashamed of Christ and his words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (c)

Rather, dear reader say,

"Ashamed of Jesus, that dear friend,
On whom my hopes of heaven depend,
No, when I blush, be THIS my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

His institutions would I prize,
Take up my cross, the shame despise,
Dare to defend his noble cause,
And yield obedience to his laws!"

Or do you tremble, lest after making a profession of religion you should bring a disgrace upon the cause of Christ by falling into sin? It is right that you should feel your own weakness, in order that you may be driven to Christ for help. But beware lest your fear of falling should lead you to distrust the divine promises, and neglect a known duty. Has not God said, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy day so shall thy strength be?" And will he not be as good as his word?

If your jealousy over your own heart should make you humble, prayerful, and watchful, its effects will be

(a) Matt. x. 37. (b) Luke xiv. 27. (c) Mark viii. 38

salutary :—but if while suspecting yourself you doubt God ; if while trembling at the deceitfulness of your own heart, you question the sincerity and faithfulness of Jehovah, you are guilty of an enormous sin.

An esteemed brother in the ministry, who some years since went to his rest, related to me the following facts.

His father had been a pious man for many years before his death, but never made a profession of religion. He attended the worship of God,—frequently led the devotions of the people at the prayer meetings,—was most actively engaged in promoting the Redeemer's cause,—and maintained throughout a most unblemished reputation.

He had however such a fear of falling into sin, and so distrusted the divine promises, that, when he was seized with the illness which carried him off, he was still unbaptized. When laid upon his death bed an indescribably dreadful horror took possession of his mind :—his guilt in having so long neglected joining himself to the Lord's people, filled him with unutterable agony :—he was literally without hope :—nothing that was said ministered to his relief ; the most precious promises and invitations of the Gospel failed to comfort him. He said, “I could not trust God to hold me up ! I did not believe his promises to those who profess his name ! I doubted his veracity and faithfulness ! I gave him the lie ! And now I am given up to horror and despair ! I have no hope ! God hath left me, and that for ever !”

In this state of distress he continued for about three weeks, every attempt to dispel the darkness of his mind having failed. At length, however, a day or two before he died, the Lord again visited him with the light of his countenance, and his end was peace. But in his last moments he said, “Let the agony which I have

endured be a warning to those who are keeping back from professing Christ through a distrust of God's promises to hold them up !”

IV. Or are you reader, one of those inconsistent baptists who have joined themselves to churches where believer's baptism by immersion, is superseded by the sprinkling of infants? Then you are guilty of *sanctioning* this violation of the Redeemer's laws. By voluntarily uniting yourselves with those, who, practise infant sprinkling, and call it christian baptism, *you* pronounce it christian baptism, as much as if I were to receive the mass in a Roman Catholic Chapel, I should declare my belief in the real presence ! By throwing all your energies into Pædo-baptist churches, you are clearly doing your best, to crush and annihilate believer's baptism by immersion, and to uphold its substitute infant sprinkling.

It will not do to protest against such a charge. We say, your conduct has this tendency, however sincerely you may deprecate such a result. You may *verbally* agree with believer's baptism by immersion, but you are *practically sanctioning* infant sprinkling.

We beseech you, with all fraternal affection, to consider the anomaly of your position ; and to ask yourself how you can lend your countenance to a ceremony which is of human invention ;—which supplants an ordinance of Jesus Christ ;—and which is fraught with such peril to the souls of men.

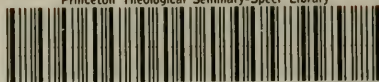
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